THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR.

THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR;

OR, A

PARAPHRASE AND VERSION

OF

THE NEW TESTAMENT;

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.

BY

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D.D.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

CONTAINING THE EPISTLE OF

PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE ROMANS,

AND HIS

FIRST AND SECOND EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS.

TENTH EDITION—CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

By ANDREW KIPPIS, D.D. F.R.S. AND S.A.

Εαν γαρ επιδω [τινα] τῃ μετα τε προσηχειν αναγνωσει, εν οιδ᾽ ὅτι η θαυμασεται τον νεν τε ανδρος, (sc. Παυλε,) εν ιδιωτικῃ λεξει μεγαλα περινοεντος, η μη θαυμασας αυτος καταγελαστος φανειται.

ORIGEN. con. CELS. lib. iii. p. 122. Catab. 1658.

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PREFACE.

AFTER what I have said concerning this work, in the prefaces to the former volumes, I have little to add, but what relates to the manner in which I have endeavoured to conduct this part upon the *Epistles;* which I bless God, he has carried me through, and thank the public they have so kindly encouraged.

As far as I know myself, I have no favourite hypothesis to serve, nor a fondness for any unscriptural phrases; in which so many have, on one side, and the other, made the very being of orthodoxy to consist. I have been disposed to let *scripture* carry me along with it, wherever it naturally leads, rather than resolve it should follow me. Instead of labouring to establish any particular human system, which has always, I fear, a leaven of imperfection attending it, I have endeavoured to keep controversy as much out of sight as possible, and to represent what I verily believe to be the scripture doctrine, in as simple a manner as I could, and divested of those particular expressions, which some, who perhaps are not averse to the main doctrine itself, are ready to rise up against.

But I have not the vanity to hope I have escaped all prejudice. Where it has been manifested, may God pardon it, may my brethren excuse it, and may divine illumination, more plentifully imparted, preserve others from being led into any errors into which I may have fallen!

I hope it will be deemed no matter of just offence, that I have not always critically examined those interpretations, which, as seeming less natural, I have declined. It had been endless, amidst such a variety of sentiments and explications, to have done this. Some commentators have darkened these epistles so much,

[illegible] I am sensible *St. Paul's* writings are best explained, by keeping their glosses as much as possible out of sight. I have therefore frequently passed them over, as if I had never heard, or known them. And if any should impute this to ignorance, I wish they had happened to be in the right; as it had been the saving a great deal of important time, not to have known the manner in which these writings have been tortured, to serve and save a favourite hypothesis.

It has seemed reasonable to me, when the text and context will bear two interpretations, to prefer that which gives the noblest and most extensive sense, and might make the passage in question most universally useful. And I hope this general apology will be sufficient.

If I have been less sanguine than some would choose, let it be forgiven. I wrote with fear and trembling when I considered the favourable reception which the former volumes had met with, and that these which I now publish might probably follow them over a considerable part of the protestant world: a testimony, I hope, that they breathed a spirit of piety, rather than party; and a reason for caution in these, that an air of authority might not mislead, or of rashness offend.

I have endeavoured to guard against excessive length in the *Paraphrase*; and so much the rather, as *St. Paul's* sentences are often so long, that I feared I should otherwise have obscured the sense, rather than illustrated it; and have rendered one of the liveliest writers in the world, (for such undoubtedly *St. Paul* is) tedious to the reader. To avoid this, I have often broke one sentence of the text into two or three in the *Paraphrase*; and have had a great deal of work in the review, to correct the obscurity, which was the natural consequence of following one leading thought.

I have aimed at making the *Improvements* naturally arise out of, and follow the scriptures illustrated; and by tracing the temper of the *apostles*, under the influence of the great truths they are inculcating, to produce correspondent affections in my own heart. I have endeavoured that the mind of the reader, more attentive per-

haps at first to the *critical sense*, may be led into the *practical use*, which, plain as it generally is, is indeed the end of all, and alas! the hardest of all to teach. I have preferred plain and useful reflections to those which might have been curious and surprising; and proposed those lessons which I would be most desirous to impress upon my own heart.

When this work is read in the families, or closets of any who practise *free prayer*, I would desire them to observe, how naturally the several *Improvements* will furnish them with proper materials for this important and delightful exercise; and by such a use of them, their hearts may be more powerfully impressed with the truths illustrated, and the duties recommended. In this view, I have in some of them suffered my thoughts, while warmed with serious and devout meditation, to breathe forth the language of prayer and praise; which may furnish my fellow Christians with a specimen of the manner in which most of them may be converted into direct addresses to God.

Upon the whole, the *design* of this work is not to proselyte men to human names, nor to reconcile them to this or the other discriminating phrase; which in the mouth of one may be truth and propriety, and in the mouth of another, falsehood and nonsense; according as any idea, or none, a just, or a wrong idea, may be affixed to them.—Nor is my design to influence Christians to worship here, or there—my design is to let into the heart the great sentiments of Christianity, and to convey them there as warmly and strongly as I could. And I hope God will graciously reward the faithful care, with which I have consulted the honour of my sacred Guide, by making it the means of spreading true religion, and nourishing many souls in fervent piety, brotherly love, and universal goodness. Amen.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR:

OR,

A PARAPHRASE

OF THE

EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

ROMANS.

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION

A

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

PARAPHRASE AND NOTES

ON THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THIS celebrated epistle was probably written from Corinth, when Paul was travelling through Greece, after finishing his tour in Macedonia, about the *year of our Lord* 58, which was the fourth of the Emperor Nero. The chief arguments to prove this have already been stated in a few words, Vol. III. p. 295. note *c*; and they are drawn from comparing Acts xx. 1—4, with Rom. xv. 25—27; xvi. 21. But for the sake of those who may not have the third volume before them, I shall exhibit them again in my notes on those texts as they occur in the epistle, and shall observe the same method elsewhere on the like occasions.

The design of the epistle has been much more controverted than its date; and yet it seems so obvious, that hardly any thing has surprised me more than the different and inconsistent plans which ingenious writers have given of it. I should but confound the reader, as well as swell this preface beyond all due bounds, if I should attempt distinctly to propose and examine them here. Instead of this, I shall therefore content myself with exhibiting (not *my own hypothesis*, for truly it has

been my care to have *no hypothesis* at all, but) what, upon reading the epistle, without any view but that of following the apostle whithersoever he should lead me, I find to be assured fact; and I will state these contents in as few and as plain words as I can, and so every reader will easily see what this great author *intended*, by seeing what he has *done*; for no doubt he answered his own design.

Now I think it must be evident to every reader of common discernment and attention, that Paul is labouring through all this epistle, to "fix on the minds of the "Christians to whom he addresses himself, a deep sense "of the excellency of the gospel, and to engage them "to act in a manner agreeable to their profession of it." For this purpose, after a general salutation, (chap. i. 1—7,) and profession of his ardent affection for them, (ver. 8—15,) he declares, that he shall not be ashamed openly to maintain the gospel at Rome; for this general reason, that it is the great and powerful instrument of salvation, both to Jews and Gentiles, by means of faith. (Ver. 16, 17.) And then to demonstrate and vindicate its excellency in this view of it, the apostle shews,

I. That the world greatly needed such a dispensation; the Gentiles being fallen into a most abandoned state, (ver. 18, to the end,) and the Jews, though condemning others, being themselves no better; chap. ii. throughout;) as notwithstanding some cavils, which he obviates, (chap. iii. 1—8,) their own scriptures, testify: (ver. 9—19.) So that there was an universal necessity of seeking for justification and salvation in this method. (Ver. 20, to the end,)

II. That Abraham and David themselves sought justification in such a way as the gospel recommends, that is, by faith, (chap. iv. 1—12,) and that a very illustrious act of it entailed everlasting honour on that great patriarch from whom the Jews boasted th[illegible] scent. (Ver. 13, to the end.)

III. That hereby believers are brought into so happy a state, as turns the greatest afflictions of life into an occasion of joy. (Chap. v. 1—11.)

IV. That the calamities brought on the seed of the *first Adam* by his ever-to-be-lamented fall, are with glorious advantage repaired to all who by faith become interested in the *second Adam.* (Ver. 12, to the end.)

V. That far from dissolving our obligations to *practical holiness,* the gospel greatly increases them by a peculiar obligation, (chap. vi. 1—14,) which the apostle strongly urges upon them. (Ver. 15, to the end.)

By these general considerations, St. Paul illustrates the *excellency of the gospel* in the six first chapters of this epistle, and they must be acknowledged considerations of the highest importance.

There were great numbers of Jews at Rome, many of whom had embraced the gospel; to make them therefore more sensible how glorious a dispensation it was, and to take them off from a fond attachment to the *Mosaical law,* now they were married to Christ by a solemn profession of his religion, (chap. vii. 1—6,) the apostle largely represents how comparatively ineffectual the motives of the *law* were to produce those degrees of obedience and holiness, which by a lively faith in the gospel we obtain. (Chap vii. 7, to the end. Chap. viii. 1, 2.) And here, in all the remainder of this celebrated chapter, the apostle gives a more particular view of those things which rendered the *gospel* so much more efficacious for this great purpose, viz. that of *forming the soul to holiness,* than the *legal œconomy* had been; (chap. viii. ver. 9.) The discovery it makes of the incarnation and death of Christ, (ver. 3, 4;) the spirituality of temper to which it calls us, (ver. 5—8;) the communication of the sanctifying and comforting influences of the spirit of God, whereby true believers are formed to a filial temper, (ver. 9—17;) the views which it exhibits of a he... with ex... f glory so great and illustrious, that the whole

creation seemed to wait for the manifestation of it, (ver. 18—25;) while in the mean time believers are supported under all their trials by the aids of the Spirit, (ver. 26, 27,) and an assurance that all events should co-operate for their advantage, (ver. 28;) since God has in consequence of his eternally glorious plan already done so much for us; (ver. 29, 30,) which emboldens us to conclude, that no accusation shall prevail against us, and no temptations or extremities separate us from his love. (Ver. 31, to the end.)

As the blessings so affectionately displayed above had been spoken of as the peculiar privileges of those who believed in the gospel, this evidently implied, that as all believing Gentiles had a full share in them, so all unbelieving Jews must necessarily be excluded from them. But as the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews was a topic of great importance, the apostle employs the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters in the discussion of it, and so concludes the argumentative part of this epistle.

He introduces what he had to say on this interesting subject, by declaring that he thought most honourably and affectionately of the Jewish nation, (chap. ix. 1—5;) and then shows,

1*st*, That the rejection of a considerable part of the seed of Abraham, and even of the posterity of Isaac too, was an incontestable fact, which the Jews themselves could not but grant to have happened, that is, with respect to the descendants of Ishmael and of Esau. (Ver. 6—13.)

2*dly*, That the sovereign choice of some individuals to peculiar privileges, to which none had any claim; and the sovereign appointment of some, from among many criminals, to peculiar and exemplary punishment; was perfectly consistent both with reason and scripture; (Ver. 14—24.)

3dly, That the taking the Gentiles to be God's peculiar people when Israel should be rejected, had been actually foretold, both by Hosea and Isaiah, (Ver. 25, to the end.)

4thly, That God hath graciously offered the gospel-salvation to Jews and Gentiles, on the same equitable and easy terms; though Israel by a bigotted attachment to their own law, had rejected it. (Chap. x. throughout.)

5thly, That, nevertheless, the rejection of Israel, though according to their own prophecies it be general, and attended with astonishing blindness and obstinacy, yet is not total, there still being a number of happy believers among them. (Chap. xi. 1—10.)

6thly, That the rejection of the rest is not final, but that the time shall come when to the unspeakable joy of the whole Christian world, the Jews shall in a body be brought into the *church of Christ.* (Ver. 11—31.)

And *lastly,* That in the mean time their obstinacy and rejection is over-ruled to such happy purposes, as serve, through the whole various scene to display, in a glorious manner, the unsearchable wisdom of God. (Ver. 52, to the end.)

The remainder of the epistle is taken up in a variety of *practical instructions* and *exhortations,* which hardly admit, and indeed do not need so particular an analysis. The grand design of them all is, " to engage Christians " to act in a manner worthy of that gospel, the excel- " lency of which he had been illustrating." He more particularly urges,—an entire consecration to God, and a care to glorify him, in their respective stations, by a faithful improvement of their different talents (chap. xii. 1—11);—devotion, patience, hospitality, mutual sympathy, humility, peace, and meekness (ver. 12, to the end;) and in the whole thirteenth chapter,—obedience to magistrates, justice in all its branches, love as the

fulfilling of the law, and an universal sanctity of manners, correspondent to the purity of those religious principles which they professed. In the fourteenth, and part of the fifteenth chapter, he dilates more largely on mutual candour, especially between those Christians who did, and those who did not think themselves obliged in conscience to observe the ceremonies enjoined by Moses; and pleads a variety of most pertinent and affecting considerations in this view, (chap. xiv. 1, to chap. xv. 17;) in prosecuting some of which, he is led to mention the extent of his own labours, and his purpose of visiting the Romans; in the mean time, recommending himself to their prayers. (Ver. 18, to the end.) And after many salutations, (chap. xvi. 1—16,) and a necessary caution against those that would divide the church, he concludes with a benediction and a doxology, suited to the general purport of what he had been writing. (Ver. 17, to the end.)

From the sketch here given, the reader might form some conjecture of the rich entertainment provided for him in this epistle, were he yet a stranger to its more particular contents; but, blessed be God, they are already familiar to almost all who have any regard for the Bible, and take any delight in perusing any part of it. I shall not therefore detain such from Paul's invaluable periods, any longer than whilst I observe, that whereas the interpretation of several phrases which occur here, has very much divided commentators, and laid the foundation for many unhappy contentions, which have been more efficacious to alienate the affections of Christians, than all the apostle's arguments, powerful as they are, have been to unite them; I am very solicitous to handle this epistle in as pacific a manner as possible. I shall therefore, as plainly as I can, give that sense of the disputed phrases which appears to me most natural, and briefly suggest, in the Notes, the reasons which induce me to understand them in the sense I have preferred. And I hope my readers will be contented with this; for were I to produce what interpreters of different opinions have alledg-

ed, and canvass the reasons by which they have endeavoured to support their explications and criticisms, I must turn my work into a Treatise of Polemical Divinity; and so quite change that original plan, which I hope will be found much more entertaining and useful: nor should I, if the scheme were thus changed, be able to comprehend in this whole volume, what I might easily find to offer on this epistle alone.

A

PARAPHRASE AND NOTES

ON THE

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

SECT. I.

The apostle begins his letter with a general salutation to the Christians at Rome; in which he transiently touches on some very important doctrines of that gospel, which it was his great design to illustrate and enforce. Rom. I. 1—7.

ROMANS I. ver 1.
PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ called *to be* an apostle,

SECT. I.
Rom. I. 1.

ROMANS I. ver. 1.

MY dear Christian brethren, you receive this epistle from *Paul*, who, though once a bitter persecutor, hath now the honour to style himself *a servant of Jesus Christ;* whose property he humbly professes himself to be, and glories in it, as his highest happiness, to be absolutely at the command and disposal of such a Master. And he is the more sensible of his great obligation to this, as he hath been, in so wonderful a manner, *called,* not only to the fellowship of that holy faith which we all profess, or to the common services of the ministerial office, but even [*to be*] invested with the dis-

SECT. I. Rom. I. 1.

tinguished character of *an apostle*[a] in the church. He once indeed boasted that he was of the Pharisaic sect, separated from the rest of the Jews by ceremonial observances, in which they place so peculiar a sanctity; but he now rejoiceth much more, that he is, by so special an act of condescending grace, *separated to the* glorious and saving *gospel of* the blessed *God*, destined 2 and devoted to its sacred interests; even to that gospel *which, before* it was thus expressly committed to the Christian apostles, *was* in a more obscure manner *promised*, and in some measure declared and exhibited, *by his prophets, in the* records of the *holy scriptures*, on which such bright lustre is now thrown by com-3 paring the predictions with the events. I would take every opportunity of promoting in your minds, and my own, the highest regard to this blessed and evangelical dispensation with which God has favoured us; *relating* chiefly *to his* only begotten and beloved *Son Jesus Christ*, *our* great anointed Saviour, our ever honoured Master and *Lord*, *who was born* a few years ago *of the seed* and family *of David*, *according to the flesh*, that is, with respect to his human descent, and so far as flesh was concerned in the consti-4 tution of his nature: [*But*] who is also to be regarded by us in a much higher view, as having been *determinately*, and in the most convincing manner, *marked out as the son of God*[b], *with* the most astonishing display of Divine *power according to* the operation of *the Spirit of holiness*[c],

separated unto the gospel of God.

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.)

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.

4 And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of

[a] *Called to be an apostle.*] As the judaizing teachers disputed Paul's claim to the apostolical office, it is with great propriety that he asserts it in the very entrance of an epistle, in which their principles were to be entirely overthrown. And the attentive reader will observe, with great pleasure, what a variety of other most proper and important thoughts are suggested in other clauses of this short introduction: particularly the views which the Jewish prophets had given of the gospel, the descent of Christ from David, the great doctrine of his resurrection, and Deity, the sending the gospel to the Gentiles, the privileges of Christians as the called and beloved of God, and the faith, obedience, and sanctity to which they were obliged, in virtue of their profession. Occasion will be given for the like reflections on a thousand other occasions, though the limits of such a work as ours will not allow us so particularly to trace them.

[b] *Determinately marked out.*] That this is the exact signification of ὁρισθεντος, Elsner has learnedly proved. Compare Acts xvii. 31.

[c] *The Spirit of holiness.*] It seems to me so little agreeable to the stile of scripture in general, to call the Divine nature of Christ the Spirit of holiness, or the Holy Spirit, that highly as I esteem the many learned and accurate commentators who have given it this turn, I rather refer it to the operation of the Spirit of God in the production of Christ's body, by which means the opposition between

SECT. I.

Rom. I. 4.

holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

which having originally produced that holy thing which was born of the virgin, exerted its energy upon him on so many occasions, and especially *in the* triumphant *resurrection from the dead*[d]; which amply rolled away all the reproach of his cross, and entitled him to the honour of the first-born among many brethren.

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name:

5 This is that illustrious person *by whom we have received grace and an apostolical mission*[e]; as I esteem it the greatest of favours to be thus employed, and furnished for this important work: especially since the plan is so extensive, and it is the glorious design of it, *that, out of regard to his name, all nations might*, in due time, *be brought to the obedience of* the Christian *faith*, and thereby rescued from a state of idolatry and wickedness, formed to the most rational and sublime pleasures in the present life, and fitted for a state of complete and eternal felicity.

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.

6 This is the grand scheme which God is already carrying on in many Gentile nations; *among whom are ye* Romans; illustrious in the world on many accounts, but on none so happy as on this, that *ye also* are now *the called of Jesus Christ*, invited by him into the fellowship of his gospel, and a participation of all its invaluable blessings.

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be*

7 And as God hath especially committed this ministration to me, I do therefore, agreeably to the general purport of my office, inscribe this epistle *to all in Rome, who are* to such a degree *beloved of God*, as to be *called* to the privileges and hopes of Christianity, [*and*] numbered among that *holy* people who solemnly profess themselves consecrated to his service. And as, in this view, I must think of you with great

κατα σαρκα and κατα πνευμα will be preserved; the one referring to the materials acted upon, the other to the Divine and miraculous Agent. Compare Luke i. 35.

[d] *Resurrection of the Dead.*] Ἐξαναστασεως νεκρων, is rendered by some, *resurrection from among the dead*, i. e. leaving many of the dead behind; and Mr. Fleming has taken great pains to shew that wherever the compound word ἐξαναστασις (for he considers it as one word) is used, it is always in this sense. See Flem. of Res. p. 70.—By this resurrection Christ was declared the Son of God; but to say he was constituted the Son of God by it, seems very unscriptural, since he was proclaimed under that title so long before his resurrection.

[e] *Grace and an apostolical mission.*] Many would render it *the favour of the apostleship*; but that rendering is not the most literal; and it is certain that Paul did receive grace to subdue his heart to the obedience of Christ, and fit him for the ministry of the gospel, before he received his apostolical commission, whenever we suppose that commission to have been dated. I therefore choose to keep the clauses thus distinct.

SECT. I.

respect, so I most unfeignedly wish *grace* and favour *to you*, with all kinds of prosperity *and peace*, *from* the blessed *God*, the great original of all good, who is now become *our Father*, *and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ*, who is exalted at his right hand, that he may scatter down all the blessings of providence and grace on his people, and may rule over all things for the good of his church.

Rom. I. 7. saints grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us begin the perusal of this excellent, though in many passages obscure, and difficult epistle, with paying our humble acknowledgments to the Divine goodness, that we are favoured with so valuable a part of scripture as that contained in the apostolical epistles. How happy are we, who read from the pen of those holy men the sentiments they entertained of Christianity, under the full illumination of the sacred Spirit;—and so learn what were the leading affections which prevailed in their minds. By these letters, they open all their hearts to us, amidst their labours and sufferings, that we also may have fellowship with them in those important things in which their communion was with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ.

Verse 1 With particular pleasure let us peruse the writings of Paul, who was, in so peculiar a manner, called to be an apostle, and separated to the gospel of God. He gloried in the name of a servant of Christ, and let us emulate it as the greatest honour. Let us be animated to exert ourselves to the utmost under that 5 character; since God hath been pleased to bring us, though originally sinners of the Gentiles, to the obedience of faith, and to reveal unto us the gospel of his Son; that glorious gospel predicted by the prophets, and opened by the apostles, yea, by 2 their Divine Master.

May our hearts adore the great Emanuel, who, though he con- 3 descended to be made of the seed of David, according to his flesh, had a Divine nature infinitely superior to it. Let us often 4 reflect on that glorious display of the power of the Holy Ghost, in his resurrection from the dead, by which he was marked out as the Son of God; and yielding to the force of such a demonstration, let us confide in him as Jesus our Saviour, and obey him as Christ our Lord.

We are called to partake of the privileges of his people; we 7 belong to the society of those who are eminently beloved of God, and who lie under obligations, as they are called an holy nation, a peculiar people, to be indeed saints, to be holy in all manner of conversation, as being entirely devoted to God and the Redeemer.

SECT. I.

May such grace be imparted to us from God our Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord, that we may not dishonour the sacred community to which we belong; that we may not with millions be cast out at last infamous and abhorred; but may enjoy its most important privileges, in that state of final and everlasting glory in which the kingdom of the Son of God shall terminate!

Verse 7

SECT. II.

The Apostle strongly expresses his affection for his Christian friends at Rome: thereby to introduce, with greater advantage, the considerations he had to lay before them in the process of the epistle. Rom. I. 8—15.

ROMANS I. 8.

FIRST, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

10 Making request (if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God) to come unto you.

ROMANS I. 8.

SECT. II. Rom. I. 8

I AM now setting myself to write to you, my dear brethren at Rome: and I must, *in the first place*, declare to you, that *I* unfeignedly *thank* that most glorious and excellent Being, who is now become *my* covenant *God* and Father *through Jesus Christ*, by whom we have received the adoption, and bless him *for you all; that your faith* in his invaluable gospel *is* so pure and stedfast, and produces such genuine fruits, that it is declared and *celebrated through the whole world;* and is universally looked upon, by all Christians in this extensive empire, as a most happy presage of the general spread of their holy religion. Such a report as this cannot 9 but excite my praises, as being so agreeable to the tenor of my petitions: *for God whom I* make it the continual business of my life to *serve with* the greatest integrity and ardour of *my spirit, in the gospel of his Son, is my witness;* and I appeal to him with confidence on so solemn an occasion, as it is he only who can judge of the fact; *how incessantly I make mention of you,* Romans, when I bow my knee before him in solemn seasons of devout retirement; *Always intreating in my prayers* the permission 10 of his gracious providence, *to come unto you, if by any means now at length*, after so long a delay, *I may have a prosperous journey* to you, *by the will of God;* on whose blessing I am sensible the prosperity of all our ways depends, and to

SECT. II.

Rom. I. 11.

whose wise determination I desire to submit all my schemes and purposes, even those which are formed with the most affectionate regard to the good of his church. Nevertheless, so far as may consist with this due resignation, I am humbly importunate with him on this head; *for I desire greatly to see you,* not from any curiosity which the grandeur and magnificence of your city excites, nor from any prospect of personal advantage that I might receive from the most considerable of you, in the greatest distinction of circumstances, but *that I may impart to you some spiritual gift,* by the laying on of my hands in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ;[a] *that* by the farther experience which you may then have of the operations of the Holy Spirit, as well as the edification to be received from what discourses may pass between us, *you may be established* in your Christian faith, and fortified against all temptation, either to renounce or dis-

12 honour it: *That is,* in other words, [*I desire*] that *while I am among you, we may be comforted together,* as I have great reason to believe that we shall, *by* the exercise of *the mutual faith, both of you and me;* while I am communicating and you receiving these blessings, and those correspondent graces are working on each side, which I doubt not will be for my improvement, as well as for yours.[b]

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established;

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me.

[a] *Impart to you some spiritual gift.*] Bos interprets this, of preaching the gospel, which was a Divine kind of food by which their souls might be strengthened; and which he, as with the richest liberality, was willing to impart and distribute among them. But as spiritual gifts, in the language of St. Paul, have generally another signification, (compare 1 Cor. xii. 1, 4, 9; xiv. 1, 12;) and it was the particular office of the apostles to bestow miraculous gifts, by the laying on of their hands, I have taken the passage in that view; and though it is reasonable to suppose the Christians now at Rome had some share of these endowments, chap. xii. 5—7, it is highly probable, that on Paul's arrival among them, they might receive them in much greater abundance. The great temptations which the inhabitants of Rome were under, both to infidelity and immorality, would make such assistances more desirable, and the apostle more solicitous for such an interview.—As for the words εν ὑμιν, it makes the construction much plainer to read them before συμπαρακληθηναι, as they can by no means, otherwise have any force at all. They must, therefore, as L'Enfant has well noted, be rendered *being among you.*

[b] For my improvement, as well as for yours.] This thought, so full of respect to his Christian friends at Rome, is suggested with great delicacy and address; and it is very reasonable to suppose that every new instance in which miraculous gifts were communicated by the laying on the hands of any of the apostles, would be a source of new edification and establishment to these holy men; as being so evident a token of the Divine presence with them, and a new and solemn seal set to the commission they had received.

SECT. II.

Rom. I. 13.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (but was let hitherto) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

And while I thus express my desire of an interview with you, *I would not have you ignorant*, my dear *brethren, that I have often been proposing* and contriving *to come to you; though I have hitherto*, by one means or another, *been hindered*. I have, I say, long meditated and desired the journey *that I might have some fruit* of my ministerial and apostolical labours *among you also; even as* I have already had from the many churches I have planted and watered *among the rest of the Gentiles*. Which I men- 14 tion, not by any means, as boasting of what I have done; *for* I know, that in the circumstances in which Christ has placed me, considering the charge he honoured me with, and the mercy he hath extended to me, *I am*, in the strictest justice, *a debtor both to the Greeks and the barbarians, both to the learned and the ignorant*[c]. Duty and gratitude bind me to do my best, to promote the conversion and salvation of men of every nation and rank, of every genius and character.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians, both to the wise, and to the unwise.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

Therefore, according to my weak 15 *abilities*, and the opportunities which God may give me, *I am ready*, and desirous[d] *to preach the gospel to you also that are at Rome*, though it be the capital of the world, a place of so much politeness and grandeur, and a place likewise where it might seem peculiarly dangerous to oppose those popular superstitions to which the empire is supposed to owe its greatness and felicity: yet still, at all events, I am willing to come and publish this Divine message among you; though it should be at the expence of my reputation, my liberty or life.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 15

HAPPY is the church of Christ, when its ministers are thus conscious of the excellency of the gospel, and thus earnestly desirous, in the midst of reproach, persecution, and danger, to

[c] *The learned and the ignorant.*] L'Enfant justly observes that σοφοι often signifies *learned*, (compare 1 Cor. i. 20, &c. and consequently ανοητοι must signify *ignorant*, or those whose understandings had not been improved by cultivation. And it is well known that the literati, or sages of antiquity, were anciently called σοφοι. See ver. 22; 1 Cor. ii. 4; iii. 20, and σοφια plainly signifies *learning*; Mat. xiii. 54; Mark vi. 2; Acts vii. 22.

[d] *Ready* and desirous.] Raphelius shews that προθυμον expresses not only a *readiness*, but, in some cases, an *eagerness of desire*. Not. ex Herod.

SECT. II.

extend its triumphs; when they can thus appeal to God, that it is with their spirit that they serve him in the gospel of his Son. This will give them a largeness of heart well becoming their office. Devotion will then flourish in their sacred retirements, as well as be maintained by them in public assemblies; and the concerns of the churches, and sometimes of far distant churches, will have a place in their thoughts and prayers at such solemn seasons.

Verse 9, 10

May they ever remember, that as the servants of Christ, they are to be the friends of mankind; and that their Master has laid such obligations upon them, that for his sake they are debtors to the whole world, in every office of Christian friendship, and especially as to any spiritual gift which by their ministration they may be instrumental in imparting. The more they exert themselves in such services, the more will their own faith and comfort, as well as that of their people, be confirmed.

14, 11, 12

But in whatever station we are, let us be forming schemes for the service of God, and good of men; projecting our journeys and visits on that plan, yet always with a becoming sense of our dependence on the smiles of heaven, for prosperity and success; and as dutiful children, referring it to the infinitely superior wisdom of our heavenly Father, to put a negative, at his sacred pleasure, upon those purposes which lie nearest to our hearts, and in which we most sincerely intend his glory.

10

SECT. III.

The Apostle declares his readiness boldly to preach the gospel at Rome, supported by a sense of its excellency; to illustrate which, he shews that the world greatly needed such a dispensation. And first he introduces a discourse of the abandoned state into which the Gentiles were fallen. Rom. I. 16—32.

ROMANS I. 16.

SECT. III. Rom. I. 16.

I HAVE told you (ver. 15.) that I am ready and desirous to preach the gospel at Rome, though the capital city of the world; and indeed there is nothing that I more earnestly wish than opportunities of bearing the most public testimony to it: *for*, with whatever contempt that sacred dispensation, and they who publish it, may be treated on account of the circumstances and death of its Founder, the character of its ministers, and the nature and tendency of its doctrines; *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,*

ROMANS I. 16.

FOR I am not ashamed of the gospel

SECT. III.

Rom. I. 16.

of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

but rather glory in it. And I have great reason to do it; *for*, while other methods, intended to promote the reformation and happiness of mankind, have been all ineffectual; *it* has clearly appeared that this *is the power of God for* complete and eternal *salvation, to every one that believeth.* It contains the most glorious display of the Divine power, efficaciously exerted for this important purpose, and operating in favour of every one who cordially embraces it. Thus salutary is it *to the Jew*, who is far from being above the need of it, and to whom, by the special command of our Lord, it is to be *first* preached and proposed[a], wherever its ambassadors come: yet not to be limited to him, but proclaimed *also to the Greek*, and the Roman, and Gentiles of every nation under heaven; who are all, with equal freedom, invited to partake its important benefits. And it is ad-

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it

17 mirably adapted to secure this great and blessed end; *for in it the righteousness of God*[b] *by faith*, that is, the method which God hath contrived and proposed for our becoming righteous, (Isa. lvi. 1,) by believing his testimony, and casting ourselves on his mercy, *is revealed to* our *faith*[c], and most clearly exhibited, as the great object of it. *As it is written* in the prophet Habak-

[a] *To the Jew first,* &c.] There is a noble frankness, as well as very comprehensive sense, in these few words of the apostle; by which, on the one hand, he strongly insinuates to the Jews, their absolute need of the gospel, in order to salvation; and on the other, while he declares to them, that it was also to be preached to the Gentiles, he tells the politest and greatest of these nations, to whom he might come as an ambassador of Christ, both that their salvation also depended upon receiving it, and that the first offers of it were every where to be made to the despised Jews.

[b] *The righteousness of God.*] Δικαιοσύνη Θεȣ plainly signifies, in several passages of this epistle, not the *essential righteousness of God's nature*, but the *manner of becoming righteous*, which God hath appointed and exhibited in the gospel. Compare chap. iii. 21, 22; x. 3. Compare Phil. iii. 9; Mat. vi. 33. And the phrase may perhaps have the same sense in several passages of the Old Testament. See Isa. xlvi. 13; li. 5. 6. 8; lvi. 1. Mr. Mace generally renders it *the divine justification*; yet cannot always render δικαιοσυνη so.

[c] *By faith, is revealed to faith.*] I would connect εκ πιςεως with Δικαιοσυνη, and suppose εις πιςιν to be governed of αποκαλυπτεται, thinking the transposition easier than the interpretation given by many others, as if it implied its being *wholly by faith*, as Mr. Mace renders it; or *going on from one degree of faith to another:* for though it is true that this is the case, I find no example in which the phrase is used in either of these senses. Those which Mr. Locke produces to justify the former of these interpretations, (viz. chap vi. 19; and 2 Cor. iii. 18,) being by no means exactly parallel. And it is so plain, that εκ πιςεως in the close of this verse, signifies *by faith*, that I wonder it should have been rendered so differently in the former clause.

SECT. III. Rom. I. 17.

kuk, chap. ii. 4. "*The just shall live by faith*;[d]" and as good men were then delivered from the ruin which involved others, by trusting to and acting upon the Divine declaration; so now the like principle of faith, receiving and embracing this great discovery which God hath made of his mercy in Christ, secures our life and salva-

is written, The just shall live by faith

18 tion. And in this view it is well worthy of our regard, so there is an absolute necessity of its being attended to; *for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven* [e], by many singular interpositions of Divine providence, and especially by the most express declaration of the sacred oracles, which teach us to look on the grand and final revelation of it as nearly approaching. And the terrors of this wrath are apparently levelled *against all impiety and unrighteousness of men who* wickedly *restrain the truth in unrighteousness;* when that heaven-born Captive would exert its energy upon their minds, and urge them to obey its dictates. This is, more or less, the generally prevailing character; and it exposes men to a sentence, the terrors of which, if they were well understood, would soon drive them, with the greatest solicitude, to seek their refuge in that gospel, the tidings of which they now so arrogantly despise.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

19 The sad character I hinted at above, of restraining and imprisoning the truth in unrighteousness, is more general than mankind are

19 Because that

[d] *As it is written, The just shall live by faith.*] The prophet Habakkuk, speaking of the destruction to come upon Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, observes how different the behaviour and states of good and bad men would be. The sinner's heart would be vainly lifted up to his destruction, while trusting to his own wisdom and power, (and accordingly prince and people became the sacrifices of this foolish self-confidence:) whereas the righteous, the truly good man, would preserve his life by believing the Divine declarations, and acting according to them; and thus under the gospel, he that believes shall live. Some would render it, The just by faith shall live, or he shall live who is justified by faith; but however this might suit the Greek phrase, it seems less agreeable to the Hebrew, from whence it is taken.

[e] *For the wrath of God is revealed,* &c.] Commentators differ much in fixing the connection of these words.—Some have considered this verse as another reason why he was not ashamed of the gospel; because it contained so awakening a declaration of the wrath of God against sin, and by that means had a most powerful tendency to awaken men's consciences, and save their souls: in which view, some treating the particle γαρ as an expletive, have rendered it, there the wrath of God is revealed. And Mr. Locke brings it nearly to the same, where he explains it as a reason why Paul was so ready to preach the gospel at Rome.—But the connection hinted in the paraphrase, seems most rational and natural. The sentences in Paul's writings often run into each other.

SECT. III.

Rom. I. 19.

which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them.

aware. We find it not only among those who have enjoyed the benefit of a revelation from God, but in all the Gentile nations. *For* the main fundamental principles of *what is* by any means *to be known of God*, that is, that he is the great Original of all, *is manifest among them, for God hath shewed it to them*, by a light universal as the sun. *For those things of him which* 20 *are invisible, are*, and have been *from the* very *creation of the world*, not only intimated, but *being duly attended to*,[f] *clearly seen by the things which are made;* the whole system of which bears such eminent signatures of the great Artificer, as loudly to proclaim his name and attributes, *even his eternal power and divinity;*[g] *so that* if any of the Gentile nations neglect to trace it with reverence, love, and obedience, *they are without excuse*, and would be destitute of every just or plausible apology for themselves, if he should enter into judgment with them: *Because knowing God*,[h] as the great For- 21 mer of all, and a Being of supreme and incomparable perfection, *they have not* adored and *glorified* [*him*] *as God* their Maker, *neither were* duly *thankful*[i] to him as their great and constant Benefactor; *but* acted as if they had neither opportunity nor capacity of acquainting themselves with him. This has generally been the character of the Gentiles, without excepting those of the politest ages and most learned nations. Instead of setting themselves to inquire

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21 Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in

[f] *Being duly attended to.*] Νοουμενα seems to have this signification, and to be, as it were, included in a parenthesis; so that τοις ποιημασι is governed of καθορᾶται.

[g] *Divinity.*] It is observable that Augustine, (Civ. Dei, vii. 1.) nicely distinguishes between θεοτητα, and θειοτητα, the word here used; maintaining that the one signifies *deity*, or *divine nature*; the other *divinity*, or *divine majesty* and *glory*: and if there be that distinction, the latter word is apparently more proper here, as divine glory results from that eternal power which is comprehended in the divine nature.

[h] *Knowing God.*] Some understand it as if he had said, *Whereas they might have known God*; but I think what Paul charges upon the philosophers is, that though they actually knew there was one supreme God, they neglected him, to conform (for low and base considerations) to the established idolatry; which was really the case, to their aggravated guilt and condemnation; as appears from most of the passages in which the Pagan writers bear a testimony to the doctrine of the Unity; a specimen of which may be seen in Dr. Sykes's Connect. chap. xiv. p. 364—383; Dr. Ab. Taylor, of Faith, p. 12—17, note; and Cudworth's Intellect. System, chap. iv. § 10—31, especially § 19—28.

[i] *Neither were thankful.*] It is worthy our observation that gratitude to God is here put for the whole of religion; and no principle can be nobler, and none can be stronger or more extensive.

SECT. I.

Rom. I. 21.

into the will of the supreme Being, and with becoming gratitude and zeal devoting themselves to his service; *they became vain* and foolish *in their* boasted *reasonings*,[k] intangling themselves with a thousand unprofitable subtilties which only tended to alienate their souls from every sentiment of true religion; *and their unintelligent heart*, instead of being enlightened by these sophistries, *was* more and more *involved in darkness*, and rendered impenetrable to the simplicity of the most important truths.

22 So that *professing themselves to be* wise, far beyond the common pitch, assuming and glorying in the title of *sages* or wise men, at least in that of lovers of wisdom,[l] *they became fools* and idiots, degrading, in the lowest and most infamous manner, the reason which they so arrogantly pretended to improve, and almost to engross.

23 *And* as this was evident in a variety of other vices, in which the philosophers of heathen nations joined with the vulgar, so particularly in the early, and almost universal prevalence of idolatry amongst them, by which *they changed the glory of the* immortal *incorruptible* and eternal *God*, even all the majestic splendours in which he shines forth through earth and heaven, *into the representing image of* mortal and *corruptible man;* which, how elegantly soever it might be traced, was a great and insufferable degradation, had their folly proceeded no farther. But not content with this, they set up as emblems of deity, and objects of worship, brutes *and* their images, *birds and four-footed animals*, *and* even such vile *reptiles* as beetles, and various kinds of serpents which creep on the dust.[m]

their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

23 And changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

[k] *Vain in their reasonings* εματαιωθησαν εν τοις διαλογισμοις αυτων.] Mr. Locke illustrates this by the stupid folly of their idolatry, 2 Kings xvii. 15, 16; Acts xiv. 15. But I rather think the word Διαλογισμοις refers to the perplexing *sophistry of the philosophers*. I have often thought Lucretius one of the most remarkable illustrations of the character here drawn.—What vain reasonings, and how dark a heart, in the midst of the most pompous profession of oracular wisdom!

[l] *Professing themselves.*] Φασκοντες ειναι σοφοι, seems just equivalent to Xenophon's φασκοντας φιλοσοφειν; which so evidently refers to the pride they took in the title *of lovers of wisdom*. See Raphel. in loc.

[m] Beetles and serpents.] Of this amazingly stupid, yet prevalent idolatry, the worship of serpents, see Jenk. Reas. of Christianity, Vol. II. p. 246—248; Tennison of Idol. chap. xiv. p. 352—354; Owen on Serp. chap. iv. and v. Stillingf. Orig. Sac. p. 516, &c.

SECT. III.

Rom. I. 24.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves;

This was such scandalous and pernicious superstition, that it is no wonder that *God* should in righteous judgment withdraw from those who introduced and encouraged it. He *therefore* not only left them to sink lower and lower in these absurd methods of worship, but also *delivered them up to* the vilest *uncleanness, in* [*gratifying*] *the* detestable *lusts of their own heart*; which grew more and more outrageous and enormous when the restraint of his common influences was thus withdrawn from their minds. Thus he left them *to dishonour their bodies among themselves*, as much as they had before dishonoured their rational faculties by such senseless idolatries.

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

25 This was so prevalent an evil, that even many of them *who* knew much better, and had in their own minds sounder apprehensions of things, yet from mere secular motives, suppressed that better knowledge, and conformed to popular superstitions and follies, and thereby *changed the truth of God*, the true doctrines of his nature, and genuine institutions of his worship, *into a lie*, [n] into abominable idolatries, founded on the falsest representations of God, and often supported by a train of artful forgeries; *and*, upon the whole, they *worshipped and served*, with religious homage and solemn devotion, *the creature, to the neglect of the* great *Creator; who*, however basely and ungratefully overlooked by men, *is* surrounded with the perpetual homage of the heavenly world, and *blessed for ever. Amen.* May he ever be held in the highest veneration, by all his creatures in heaven and earth, throughout all succeeding ages!

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections. For even their women did change their natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving

26 *Therefore*, I say, because of this inexcusable neglect of the ever-blessed *God*, he *abandoned them to the most infamous passions; for* even *their women*, from whom the strictest modesty might reasonably have been expected, *changed the natural use* of the other sex *to that which is against nature* [o]. *And likewise their males, leaving the natural use of the female, have been*

[n] *Changed the truth of God into a lie.*] Elsner takes great pains to shew, that the truth of God here signifies what he really was; and a lie, a false representation. See Elsner's Observ. Vol. II. p. 11. It is well known that idols are often called lies. Isa. xliv. 20: Jerem. iii. 23; xiii. 25; xvi. 19.

[o] *To that which is against nature.*] Many horrible illustrations of this may be seen in Bos, Exercit. in loc.

SECT. III.

Rom. I. 27.

inflamed with the most scandalous and abominable *desires towards each other, males with males perpetrating that which is most shameful* to mention, and detestable to think of, *and receiving in themselves the just recompense of their error,* in that stupidity and degeneracy of mind 28 to which they were evidently left. *And* thus, upon the whole, *as they were not solicitous*[p] *to retain God in their knowledge,* nor to propagate suitable conceptions of him, or address him by proper acts of rational and pure devotion, *God delivered them over to an undiscerning mind, to do things most inexpedient*[q] and enormous; as he cannot more dreadfully punish one sin than 29 by giving up the offender to more. And accordingly, universal depravation and corruption seized and possessed them; and the whole series of their discourses and actions shewed that they were *full of all* manner of *injustice, lewdness, mischief, covetousness,* and *malignity;* perpetually injuring each other, and drawing damage and misery on themselves; while they were *filled* and intoxicated *with* every imaginable vice, *envy, murder, contention, fraud,* the *inveteracy of* all *evil* and pernicious *habits,*[r] which no sense of decency, or regard to reputation or 30 interest could reform. Instead of entertaining those friendly regards to each other which common humanity might have taught them, they were *whispering* something against those that were present, as well as *backbiting* such as were absent; and being *haters of God,* discontented with his government, and disaffected to his rule as a righteous and holy Being, who could not but be highly displeased with their abominations, they were *violent* and overbearing[s] in their behaviour to each other,

the natural use of the women, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient:

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, de[illegible]

[p] *Were not solicitous.*] Εδοκιμασαν imports a *concern to bring things to a trial or touchstone,* which this translation expresses much better than ours, which coldly renders it, *they liked not.*

[q] *Things most inexpedient.*] The original expression is a meiosis, to express things most detestable; as αεικεα εργα signifies all the *inhumanities* which Achilles most ungenerously practised on the corpse of Hector. Compare Wisd. xiv. 22—27. See Bos, in loc.

[r] *Mischief, malignity, inveteracy.*] According to some acute commentators, πονηρια signifies *doing mischief,* κακια *a malicious temper,* and κακοηθεια *a custom of repeating it frequently.*

[s] *Violent* and overbearing.] Ὑβριστης is properly opposed to σωφρων, and expresses the character of a man who is resolved to gratify his own appetites and passions, and to pursue what he apprehends his own interest, right or wrong: without at all regarding those inconve-

ful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

proud of what they had, and arrogant *boasters* of what they had not; ingenious *inventors of evil* and vicious *things*, who piqued themselves on making some new discoveries in the arts of sensuality or mischief. And it is no wonder that when there was such an impious disposition to rebel against God, they should also be *disobedient to* earthly *parents:* And that

Rom. I. 30

31 Without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

31 they should act in so wild and unaccountable a manner, as to seem to be *without* the natural *understanding* of men; *implacable* in their resentments, *without natural affection*,[t] even to their own children in some instances, and to their parents in others. And when a reconciliation was attempted, and mutual engagements entered into with the highest solemnity, they were, on any present appearance of advantage, presently for *breaking* those pacific *treaties*, and *unmerciful* in pursuing their schemes of cruelty and revenge, whenever they got any new opportunity of doing it. This was the character

32 Who knowing judgment of God, that they which

32 which generally prevailed in the heathen world, *who, though they knew the righteous judgment of God*,[u] and though their consciences, as well as the lessons of their wisest teachers, told them,

[illegible] sufferings which he may thereby bring upon others.

[t] *Without natural affection.*] Αςοργη may include the absence of both parental and filial affection. The custom of exposing new-born infants, which prevailed so generally in the heathen world, and that among polite nations, and persons, in other respects not destitute of humanity, is a most striking instance of the truth of this assertion; as that of killing their aged parents also was of the counterpart.

[u] *Who, though they knew the righteous judgment of God, &c.*] The Clermont copy inserts the words ουκ ενοησαν after επιγνοντες; agreeable to which reading, Mr. Locke renders it, who, though they acknowledge the rule of right [δικαιωμα] prescribed them by God, and discovered by the light of nature, yet did not understand that they who do these things are worthy of death, and therefore—συνευδοκουσι live well with those who do them, "that is, converse with them, without "any marks of disesteem and censure; "whereas the Jew, who condemns the "evils which he practises, is much more "inexcusable;" so connecting this verse with the 2d chapter. But I neither think the authority of the Clermont copy, by any means sufficient to justify our admitting this reading, nor can imagine it would make good sense; for surely if they knew a rule of right prescribed by God, they could not be ignorant that the violation of it would expose them to punishment; and it is evident, in fact, from numberless passages in heathen moralists, that they were not ignorant of it. The vulgar Latin does indeed partly follow this peculiar reading; but they add, *non solum qui faciunt, sed qui consentiunt facientibus*, "not only they who com- "mit these crimes, but they who agree "with others that commit them;" which I think makes a sense much preferable to Mr. Locke's, though by no means agreeable to the original—It seems here to be implied, that to look with complacency on the vices of others, is one of the last degrees of degeneracy.

SECT. III.

Rom. I. 32

that they who do such things as these *are worthy of death; yet not only do these things* themselves, *but* also look with complacency upon, and *agree together with those that do them;* forming confederacies to countenance and support each other, and impudently out-braving those who should presume to bear testimony against them.

commit such things are worthy of death,) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 21 WHEN we dwell on the representation of that character which this humane and candid apostle gives us of the heathen world, with regard to their idolatries, impieties, and other immoralities, what reason have we to bless God for the dispensation of the gospel; which hath wrought so effectually for the reformation of thousands, who might otherwise have been as deeply drenched in all these enormities as the vilest of them! For we know, that it was not the barbarous nations alone, but some of the politest, who in neglect of all the opportunities they had of knowing better, and in opposition to that better knowledge which some of them actually obtained, were often distinguished for the superstition of their worship, and the scandal of their lives; so that the chief illustrations of this sad subject are to be borrowed from Egypt, Greece, and Rome.

Let us learn not only to guard against the vices for which the heathens are here branded, (knowing that the practice in us will be yet more criminal,) but let us cultivate the opposite virtues of justice and temperance, benevolence and contentment, peace 29–31 and charity, sincerity and humility; and let us cherish the natural tender affections. If offences arise, let us always be ready to hearken to terms of reconciliation, and faithfully observe 32 our engagements; taking the greatest heed, that knowing so clearly as we do the judgments of God, we do not, by any means, give countenance to, and seem to join in a confederacy with sinners.

Let us bless God for all the capacities and opportunities he hath given to the heathen nations of coming to the knowledge of himself by the things that are made, which declare his eternal 19, 20 power and Godhead, and render inexcusable both atheists and idolaters among them. But when we recollect how many either entirely lost the truth, or imprisoned it in unrighteousness, let us be most affectionately thankful for so superior a light; for that gospel which is to every believer, without exception, the power 16 of God for salvation, and which declareth the righteousness of God, as the object of our faith. May we properly receive it, 18 and so escape the terrors of that Divine wrath which is revealed from heaven against all impiety, and unrighteousness of men.

To this revelation let us give the most attentive heed, and be

much upon our guard against those vain and sophistical reasonings to which they, who knowing God, neglect to glorify him as God, are so ready to fly; lest we approve ourselves fools in proportion to the degree in which we profess to be wise, and provoke God to give us up to an injudicious mind, and to leave us to that reciprocal influence which evil principles and evil actions have to render each other more inveterate and incurable.

SECT. III. Verse 21 22 28

SECT. IV.

The Apostle discourses more particularly of those who knew their duty, and yet acted contrary to it; and of the condemnation they must expect from God; that so he might properly introduce the particular charge he had to advance against the Jews, as, above all others, answering that character. Rom. II. 1—16.

ROMANS II. 1.

THEREFORE thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

ROMANS II. 1.

SECT. IV. Rom. II. 1

I HAVE just been speaking of the great and aggravated guilt of those, who not only do things which they know to be displeasing to God, and evil in themselves, but also agree together to countenance those that do them. And it may be, some who know they are not of that number,[a] but, on one principle or another, bear their testimony against the prevailing immoralities of those about them, may imagine themselves secure and happy. I must, *therefore*, argue from the premises just laid down, that *thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest*, and pretendest to pass sentence upon others: *for* I know what the character of such generally is, and I know that the very best of them all have their blemishes and faults; and therefore I may say, that *wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself: for thou who judgest, doest the same things* in many instances,[b]

[a] Some who know that they are not of that number.] There is a greater delicacy in the apostle's transition here, than most commentators have imagined. From what he had before said, to prove the most abandoned and ignorant of the heathens inexcusable in their wickedness, he justly infers, that the crimes of those who had such knowledge of the truth as to condemn the vices of others, were proportionably yet more inexcusable. This was eminently the case with the Jews: but he does not directly speak of them till the 9th verse; but draws the inference at first in such general terms as might also comprehend Gentile philosophers, and all others who contradicted the moral instructions which they themselves gave.

[b] *Doest the same things.*] Dr. Whitby shews, by many very proper quotations, chiefly from Josephus, that the Jews of

SECT. IV.

Rom. II. 2.

and consequently art convicted out of thine own mouth. *For we know* in general, *that the judgment of God is according to truth* and justice, *against* all *those who do such things*, however they may behave towards their fellow-sinners.

3 *And* canst thou then, by the sentence which thou passest upon others, think to evade that which goeth forth against thyself? Or *reasonest thou thus, O man*, whosoever thou art, whether Pagan philosopher or Jewish teacher, *who judgest those that do such things, while thou doest them thyself, that thou shouldest escape the judgment*

4 *of God? Or* is thy heart so obdurate, as to make light of those judgments which thou must certainly meet, because they are not immediately executed: and *doest thou* indeed *despise the riches of his gentleness and forbearance, and long-suffering*,[c] exercised towards thee for such a length of time, so as to think it may be safely trifled with? Surely if thou dost, thou art shamefully ignorant indeed, as *not knowing, that the* goodness and *gentleness of God leadeth thee to repentance.* He bears with thee, that thou mayest prevent the threatened blow, by humbling thy-

5 self before him, and forsaking thy sins. *But* this day of mercy and grace has its limits; and however thou mayest flatter thyself now, the consequence will soon appear fatal, and thou wilt find, to thine unutterable confusion, that *by this hardness and impenitence of thy heart*, thou *art treasuring up to thyself* a more abundant store of *wrath, in the day of* final *wrath, and* of that *revelation of the righteous judgment of God*, which is now, as it were, under a veil, and so disregarded because unseen; but it shall then be set

6 forth to view, in all its lustre and terror. The Divine Being is indeed a most gracious and indulgent Father; but be it known unto thee, that

2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things.

3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

6 Who will render

that age were guilty of many of those crimes which had been enumerated above. See Joseph. de Bello Judaic. lib. v. cap. 13, [al. 16,] § 6, and lib. vii. cap. 8, [al. 16,] sect. 1. Edit. Havercamp.

[c] *Gentleness, forbearance, and long-suffering.*] Mr. Blackwall (Sacr. Class. Vol. I. p. 306,) enlarges on the great emphasis of these words in the original. He thinks χρηστοτης signifies *benevolence* and *generosity* in the general, ανοχη *mercy* in the proposals of pardon and happiness to fallen creatures, and μακροθυμια *patience* in attending so long on such obstinate wretches. I have given what I take to be the exactest rendering of each; but did not judge it convenient to protract the paraphrase of so lively a passage, by attempting in many words to illustrate it.

SECT. IV. Rom. II.

to every man according to his deeds:

he is also the wise and holy Governor of the universe; *who will recompense every man according to his works*, in the final distribution of good and evil, how unequal soever his present dispensations may seem.

7 To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life:

7 *To those* generous and elevated souls, *that* are not discouraged by present difficulties, nor ensnared by the allurements of the world, but amidst them all, *by a patient*, and persevering *course of well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality*, he will graciously render the great prize they pursue, even *eternal life*.

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation, and wrath;

8 *But to the* perverse and ungrateful *children of contention*[d], *who* quarrel with the merciful dispensation that should have saved them, and *are* obstinately *disobedient to the* dictates of *truth, but* servilely *obedient to* the usurped and base tyranny of *unrighteousness*, perversely opposing the evidence of true religion, because they are averse to its practical design, [*he will render*] a quite different portion. For them is reserved all that can be imagined most dreadful; *indignation* shall be conceived, *and wrath* shall break forth against them;

9 Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first,

9 The sharpest *tribulation*, the most hopeless *and* inextricable *anguish* and despair[e], which shall be poured out in a torrent of unmingled misery, even *upon every soul of man who worketh* that which is *evil*. This shall be rendered *to the Jew* in the *first* place[f], who far

[d] *Children of contention.*] Mr. Locke thinks that patience in the former verse, and contention here, refer to the malignant enmity with which the Jews endeavoured to exclude the Gentiles from the church. Compare Gal. i. 7; 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5; but it seems much better to explain it in a latitude which shall indeed include this, as one instance of obstinacy and perverseness, without contracting that extensive and important sense which our interpretation gives. And that the contention of the Gentiles is included here, evidently appears by the conclusion of the sentence.

[e] *Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish* &c.] Here seems to be a reference to those expressive words, Psal. lxxviii. 49, when speaking of the Egyptians, it is said, *he cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble.* And it may finely intimate, that the Jews would, in the day of vengeance, be more severely punished than even their Egyptian enemies were, when God made their plague so wonderful. Στενοχωρια properly signifies *straitness*; and is used by Xenophon to signify a narrow way, that cannot be passed, See Raphel. Not. ex. Xen. in loc. As for the difference between Θυμος and Οργη, Elsner (Observ. Vol I. p. 14.) takes some pains to shew, that the former signifies the first *conception of anger*, the latter a desire and *purpose of punishing*. Some reference to this interpretation will be found in the pharaphrase, tho' expressed as briefly as possible.

[f] *To the Jew first.*] Here we have the first express mention of Jews in this section; and it is introduced with great energy and weight. Their being trained up in the knowledge of the true religion, and having Christ and his apostles first sent to them, will place them in the foremost rank of the criminals who obey not the truth.

SECT. IV.

Rom. II. 9.

from escaping by his superior advantages *and* privileges, will, by the abuse of them, be obnoxious *to* distinguished wrath. Nor shall *the Greek* escape, who shall be judged according to the light he hath enjoyed, or the opportunity he had of enjoying more.

10 *But*, as I said before, and repeat it with pleasure, as the more delightful part of the subject, which I love to dwell upon; *glory, honour, and peace* [*shall be*] recompensed *to every one who worketh good; first to the Jew*, who stands fairer (in virtue of the Divine revelation he enjoys) for distinguished degrees of it, as well as receives the first messages of this salvation; *and then to the Greek*, who, if he exclude not himself, shall not be exempted from his proper share.

11 *For there is no* partial *acceptance of persons with God*[g], which should engage him on account of outward condition, or lineal descent, to spare obstinacy and wickedness in a Jew, or to reject the humble faith and obedience of a Gentile.

12 And he will fully display this impartiality of administration in the great day of universal judgment; *for as many as have sinned without the* Mosaic *law*[h], and have continued impenitent in their crimes, *shall without the law perish;* the light of nature, without the knowledge of revelation, being sufficient to condemn them. *And as many as have sinned under* the instruction and obligation of *the law shall* with proportionable severity *be judged by the law*[i], and meet with a more awful sentence, as their offences have been aggravated by such express discoveries of the Divine will:

and also of the Gentile;

10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile;

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

12 For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.

g *Acceptance of persons.*] That is, in passing the final sentence, he is determined by their real characters.—This is very consistent with an equality in distributing advantages and opportunities of improvement, according to the sovereign pleasure of the great Lord of all. This assertion of the apostle's, so often repeated, will appear the more important and seasonable, as the Jews thought that no Israelite should be deprived of future happiness, whatever his faults had been; unless he were guilty of apostasy, idolatry, and a few other very enormous crimes. See Mr. Jortin's Discourses concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion, p. 26, 27, and the notes there.

h *Sinned without the Mosaic law*, &c.] It is evident that must here be intended; for none can sin without the natural law, under which all are born.

i *Perish—be judged.*] These two phrases are so different, that one would hardly think they were intended to signify the same ideas; yet so many arguments, both from reason and revelation, lie against supposing wicked heathens annihilated, as Mr. Locke seems to insinuate from these words, that I think it most rational to interpret both these expressions as signifying real punishment, but in different degrees.

SECT. IV.

Rom. II. 13.

13 (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

For not the men who are merely respectful *hearers of the law* of God in the synagogues, or loud and vehement applauders or defenders of it elsewhere, [*are*] *just before God*, nor will he ever accept any encomiums upon it, instead of the obedience it demands; *but the doers of the law*, who steadily and universally, in the tenor of their lives, act agreeably to its precepts; they, and they only, *shall be justified* in the day of final audit and account; whether their knowledge of it were more or less express.

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

14 *For when the Gentiles, who have not the* written revelation of the Divine *law, do, by* an instinct, of *nature*, and in consequence of the untaught dictates of their own mind, *the* moral *duties required by the* precepts of the *law*,[k] *these having not the* benefit of an express and revealed *law*, *are* nevertheless *a law unto themselves:* the voice of nature is their rule, and they are inwardly taught, by the constitution of their own minds, to revere it as the law of that God by whom it was formed.

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean-while accusing, or else excusing one another;)

15 And they *who* are in this state, do evidently *shew the work of the law*, in its most important moral precepts, *written upon their hearts*, by the same Divine hand that engraved the decalogue upon the tables given to Moses: *their consciences joining to bear witness* to it, *and* [*their*] *mutual reasonings among themselves, accusing* those that break such precepts *or defending* those who observe them, attest the same thing.

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

16 As therefore there are sure traces of some natural knowledge of the law, a due regard will be maintained towards them, and on this most equitable principle will the grand process be conducted, *in that* awful *day when God shall judge the secrets of the* hearts of *men by Jesus Christ, according to the* tenor of that glorious dispensation which I may call *my gospel*,[l] as it is committed to my care;

[k] *By nature.*] Raphelius (Not. ex Xen. in. loc.) shews that animals are said to do that by nature which they do by instinct; and Elsner, Observ. Vol. II. p. 16.) that τα τȣ νομȣ signifies the duties inculcated by the law.

[l] *According to my gospel.*] Nothing is more contrary to the apostle's meaning, as expressly declared above, than that all men are to be judged by the gospel. He only means, that the gospel teaches such a judgment. Therefore some transposing the last clause, render it very plainly and properly, *In the day when God shall, according to my gospel, judge the secrets of men.* Mr. Mace transposes the whole sixteenth verse to join it with the twelfth; and I think it very evident, the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth verses come in as a parenthesis: but the trans-

SECT. IV in which no doctrine is more important, or evident, than that of a universal and most impartial judgment.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us revere the righteous judgment of God, which is here laid before us in so particular and affecting a manner; remembering we are each of us to have our part in that day of final retribution, and that the secrets of our hearts will then be made manifest. Let us often reflect upon the awful result; and consider, that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish will be our portion, if we are contentious and disobedient to the truth, yea, if we do not, by a patient continuance in well-doing, seek the promised glory, honour and immortality; which if we do, we shall, through the grace of God, secure everlasting life. Vain will our knowledge and our profession otherwise be, and our testimony against the sins of others will only enflame the guilt of our own.

(Verse 16, 8, 9, 7, 1)

Let it ever be remembered, that the goodness of God, which we have such daily reason to acknowledge and adore, gently takes us, as it were, by the hand, and leadeth to repentance; and while we continually live upon it, let us not act in contempt of it, or abuse it to our own inconceivable detriment. Is the wrath already laid up so small, that we should be increasing the treasure? Increasing the terrors of the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?

(4, 5)

It will be a most impartial as well as important day. Nor are we concerned to know how the heathen will fare in it; let it suffice us, that if they are condemned, they will be righteously condemned; not for remaining ignorant of the gospel they never had an opportunity of hearing, but for violating those precepts of the Divine law which were inscribed on their consciences. Let us bless God that he has written it there, and reverence the traces of his hand on our own minds; always remembering, that the discoveries of revelation were never intended to erase or discredit the dictates of nature, but to illustrate and confirm them.

(14, 15)

12, 13 We shall be judged by the dispensation we have enjoyed; and how devoutly soever we may hear and speak of it, shall be condemned, if we have not acted agreeably thereto. The Lord grant that we may all find that mercy of the Lord, which we shall every one of us need in that day; and that we may find it, may we keep that day continually in view, and direct all our actions with a regard to its grand decisions.

position of verses seems a dangerous thing; though, I think, in some evident cases, that of a few words may be pardoned, considering the different genius of ancient and modern, eastern and western languages.

SECT. V.

Paul proceeds to fix the charge upon the Jews, that they were sinners, as well as the Gentiles; and consequently stood in need of justification by the grace of the gospel, as well as they. Rom. II. 17, *to the end.*

ROMANS II. 17.

BEHOLD, thou art called a Jew; and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God;

18 And knowest *his* will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law.

ROMANS II. 17.

SECT. V. Rom. II. 17.

I HAVE hitherto been speaking of the inexcusable guilt of those who have the greatest opportunity of knowing their duty, and in consequence of this acknowledge it, and condemn others for acting contrary to it; while yet they are guilty of the same evils. I will now keep on the reserve no longer; but will boldly declare, that in what I have said concerning such, I meant the conviction not merely of heathen philosophers, but of wicked Jews; and if thou, O reader, art such an one, I apply myself personally to thee. *Behold, thou bearest the name of a Jew,*[a] *and thou reposest thyself on* the knowledge and profession of *the law,* as if that would save thee; *and thou gloriest in* the true *God,* in whom thou believest; as if thy descent and profession, by virtue of the peculiar covenant he made with thy fathers, must necessarily intitle thee to his favour. Thou boastest of it as thine honour 18 *and* happiness, that thou *knowest [his] will;* not merely by uncertain conjecture and reasoning, but by an express revelation; *and* that thou accurately *discernest* and distinguishest upon *things that differ,*[b] which untaught nature may in many respects confound; *being* thyself well *instructed out of the law,* having been from thy infancy catechised and educated in the accurate knowledge

[a] *Bearest the name of a Jew.*] The apostle frequently addresses himself to unconverted Jews in this epistle, and especially here; for no doubt there were many of them at Rome, who might be curious to know, what he, who had been so violent an enemy to Christianity, would say to recommend it. And Paul's great love to them engaged him, on the contingency of such an event, to insert such passages; and other passages are calculated for the conviction of other unbelievers: as well as for the edification of Christians.

[b] *Discernest things that differ.*] So Beza renders δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα; and Elsner vindicates it in a manner which seems very satisfactory; though Capellus, Hammond, and Erasmus, defend our translation, *approvest things which are more excellent.* See Elsner, Observ. Vol. II. p. 17.

SECT. V.

Rom. II. 19.

of it. *And* in consequence of this, thou *art* very *confident, that thou thyself art* fit to teach the whole Gentile world; to be *a guide of the blind*, as thou thinkest them to be; *a light to them, that* for want of the light thou dispersest, 20 *are in darkness: An instructor of the ignorant, a teacher of* these *babes*,[c] as thou esteemest them in comparison with thyself; *having* perhaps not only the sacred oracles in thine hands, but also in order to render thee more expert and methodical in the use of them, *a* summary, a compendious system and *form of the knowledge and truth which is* contained *in the law.*[d]

19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,

20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

21 Now I deny not that thine advantages are in this respect very great; but I must caution thee, that thou art not deceived by any absolute dependence upon them; and must press thee to reflect how far thine own temper and conduct is agreeable to this knowledge and profession. Let me ask *therefore, Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?* Dost thou act as if thou hadst forgotten thine own precepts, or didst 22 imagine they did not oblige thee? *Thou that preachest*, for instance, *a man should not steal, dost thou* think thyself tolerated to *steal?*[e] *Thou that forbiddest a man to commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that dost* so *abominate idols*, and speakest of them at all times with such great and just abhorrence, *dost thou commit sacrilege* by robbing the true God of what he so justly claims from thee, whether of outward tribute, or inward homage; while thou so strenuously disputest against any other object of 23 worship? In one word, *thou that gloriest in*

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

22 Thou that sayest, A man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the

[c] *Blind,—ignorant,—babes.*] These were titles which the proud Jews often gave to the Gentiles.

[d] *Form.*] Μορφωσις has this signification, 2 Tim. iii. 5. And Bos (Exercit. p. 100, 101.) shews, that it often signifies *the sketch*, or *out-lines of a thing*; which suits the interpretation here given better than he seems to apprehend.—L'Enfant renders it, *having in the law the rule of knowledge and truth;* but I know not whether μορφωσις ever signifies *rule;* and if the article has any force, it is in favour of the rendering we have preferred.

[e] *Dost thou steal?*] Grotius on this text proves from Josephus, that some of the Jewish priests lived by rapine, depriving others of their due share of the tithes, and even suffering them to perish for want; that others were guilty of gross uncleanness; and as for sacrilegiously robbing God and his altar, it had been complained of as early as Malachi's days, Mal. i. 8, 12, 13. So that the instances are given with great propriety and judgment.

law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

the law, as so excellent, and thinkest it such an honour to be acquainted with it, *dost thou by the transgression of the law dishonour God*, and act as if thou wert studying the declaration of his will, only to shew him in a more presumptuous and contumacious manner, that thou dost not regard it? It is not an improbable supposition that I have now been making, *for*, I who have had an opportunity of knowing by long experience the temper and character of the Jewish people, know it to be such, that I will boldly say to their faces, "*the name of* the *God* "of Israel, for which you profess so warm a "zeal, *is by your means blasphemed among the* "*Gentiles*, and his holy religion brought into "contempt by your notorious and scandalous "immoralities; *as it is written* in your own "scriptures concerning your fathers, whose "evil deeds you so generally imitate." (Compare 2 Sam. xii. 14; Isa. lii. 5; Ezek. xxxvi. 23.)

24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

24

25 For circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

25 My duty absolutely requires me to give such cautions, and to make such remonstrances as these; *for circumcision is indeed profitable if a man keep the law*[f]: his being a Jew, if he be truly a good man, will give him many advantages for becoming a Christian; and were his obedience perfect, would entitle him to the blessings promised in the law. *But if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is* in effect *become uncircumcision*: thou wilt have no more benefit by it than thou hadst never received it; as thou well knowest, that according to the tenor of the law itself, circumcision, far from being any excuse for thy offence, will rather expose thee in many respects to a much greater punishment.

26 Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall

26 *And therefore*, by a parity of reason, *if the uncircumcision*, that is, an uncircumcised person, *observe* and obey *the* greatest and most important precepts or *righteous determinations of the law*, though without any ac-

[f] *For circumcision*, &c.] It is most evident that γαρ cannot here signify that the following words are a reason for what was asserted in those immediately preceding; it seems little more than expletive, as the particle *now* among us often is. I shall not therefore in many passages take the pains of endeavouring to find such a connection as would justify the use of it in its strictest propriety; in attempting which, many have vainly perplexed themselves to no other purpose than to make the writings of St. Paul appear more obscure than they really are.

SECT. V.

Rom. II. 26.

quaintance with the book that contains them; if he faithfully and steadily conform himself to the main branches of virtue and rectitude it requires, *shall not his uncircumcision be imputed* or reckoned *as circumcision?* Shall he not be treated as favourably by God in his final account as if he had been circumcised, when his not being so does not proceed from any contempt of the Divine authority, but from his knowing nothing of the rite, or not apprehending it in his particular circumstances to be his duty to

27 practise it? *Yea*, it is certain that *the uncircumcision that is by nature*, a man who continues uncircumcised as he was born, *accomplishing* the great moral purposes of *the law*, in subserviency to which its rituals were appointed, *shall judge* and condemn *thee; who* while thou actest *by the letter* of its ceremonial precepts, *and* retainest *circumcision* and all its appendages with the greatest exactness, *art* nevertheless in things far more essential and important, *a transgressor of the law*, to the spiritual meaning and extent of which thou continuest an utter stranger, and which thou encouragest thyself, by these ex-

28 ternal observances, to neglect. *For* upon the whole, as you would not allow any man to be truly a Jew, merely for any outward rites which he might observe, if he continued uncircumcised, how carefully soever he might conceal it; so must I freely declare to you, that *he is not* in the most sublime and important sense *a Jew*, that is, one of God's covenant and beloved people, *who is* merely *so in outward shew, neither* indeed [*is that*] the true *circumcision which is*

29 *apparent in the flesh.* Nothing merely ritual or ceremonial can recommend a man to the Divine favour; *but he* [*is*] *a Jew*, that is, one of God's chosen people, *who is one in the hidden part*, as David expresses it (Psal. li. 6.) or in the secret recesses of the soul; *and* the acceptable *circumcision* [*is that*] *of the heart*, which your own prophets so often inculcate, (see Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; Jer iv. 4;) when they urge the putting away all inward impurity and obstinacy, as that which is most highly offensive in the sight of God. This excellent circumcision is seated *in the spirit*, consisting of a change made there by

not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is *that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

29 But he *is* a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not

in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

SECT. V.

Rom. II. 29.

the operation of the Divine Spirit himself, and *not* merely *in* an external conformity to *the letter* of the law, of which the worst of men may be capable. Now such a person, whatever his outward profession may be, is one, *whose praise* [*is*] *not* so much *of men*,[g] who eager to spread their own sects applaud those who become their proselytes, or most strenuously retain their peculiar forms; *but* is *of God*, who alone knows the heart, and whose esteem and complacency is infinitely preferable to that of whole nations or worlds.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our hearts be always attentive to these lessons of inward religion which the sacred oracles fail not continually to inculcate. It is the praise of God that is in question: and who can be so lost to all true greatness of mind, to all generous ambition, as that he should not long, and even burn to obtain it? Or who can enjoy, or attend to the praise of men, while he has any reason to fear that God condemns? (Verse 28, 29)

To have the name of a Jew, or of a Christian! How little will it signify? To boast in an external and temporary relation to God, if, we are such as shall finally be disowned by him, will make us the more wretched. To have known his will, to have distinguished things that differ, and set up for instructors or reprovers of others, will only furnish out matter of condemnation from our own mouths; if, while teaching others, we teach not ourselves. Well may the punishment be aggravated, where the guilt is so great; when it brings so peculiar a reproach upon religion, and in effect dictates so many blasphemies against the name of God, at the very time it pretends to exalt it. (17, 18, 19, 21, 24)

We pity the Gentiles, and we have reason to do it; for they are lamentably blind and dissolute: but let us take heed, lest those appearances of virtue, which are to be found among some of them, condemn us; who, with the letter of the law, and the gospel, and with the solemn tokens of a covenant-relation to God, transgress his precepts, and violate our engagements to him; so turning the means of goodness and happiness into the occasion of more aggravated guilt and misery. (26, 27)

[g] *Praise is not of men*, &c.] Perhaps here is a reference to the etymology of the word Jew; it being derived from the name of *Judah*, which signifies *Praise*. Compare Gen. xxix. 35; and xlix. 8.

SECT. VI.

After removing some objections, the sad case both of Jews and Gentiles is farther illustrated; and the representation shewn to be agreeable to the scriptures of the Old Testament, Rom. III. 1—19.

ROMANS III. 1.

SECT. VI.

Rom. III. 1

BUT some may be ready to object, "If it be "so, that no circumcision, but that of the "heart, will avail to men's final happiness; *what* "*then* [*is*] *the advantage of the Jew, or what* "*the profit of circumcision,* which yet you seem-"ed to allow, when you said but just before, "(chap. ii. 25.) that it in some circumstances 2 "profiteth?" Nor do I deny it now; I say that it profiteth *much every way*, or in a variety of respects; as I shall hereafter more fully shew, (compare chap. ix. 4, 5,) and *chiefly in that they*, who have received it, *have been intrusted with the oracles of God*[a] in the Divinely inspired scriptures; by which they are taught many important lessons, which may direct their lives and dispose them to embrace the gospel, to the security of their final and everlasting salvation.

3 Of great importance indeed are these divine oracles to this purpose. *And what if some*, and they a considerable number, of those who once possessed these invaluable treasures, *believed* them *not*, or did not duly consider what they speculatively believed, and so rejected the gospel to which they were intended to lead: *Shall their unbelief disannul* and enervate *the faith of God?*[b] Shall it destroy his fidelity to his promises, or prevent our receiving them and owning their 4 accomplishment, with becoming regard? *God forbid*, that we should insinuate any thing of this kind. No; *let* the blessed *God* ever be acknowledged to *be true* and faithful, *though every man*

ROMANS III. 1.

WHAT advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision;

2 Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as

[a] *The oracles of God.*] This is so remarkable and important a testimony to the Divine inspiration of the Old Testament in general, that it can leave no doubt concerning the full persuasion of St. Paul upon this head.

[b] *The faith of God.*] This is an ambiguous expression, and may either signify, the fidelity of God, or that faith of ours which God has pointed out as the way of obtaining justification and life. The senses run at last into each other. I have included both; and hinted, in the last words of the paraphrase, at a sort of intermediate sense; as the attentive reader will observe.

it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

SECT. VI. Rom. III. 4.

be esteemed a *liar*, and unfit to have any confidence reposed in him; *as it is written*, (Psal. li. 4.) "*that thou mightest be justified in thy* "*words, and mightest* upon the whole *over-* "*come, when thou art called into judgment*;[c] "that they, who insolently dare to arraign the "equity of thy conduct, may soon meet with "the confusion they deserve."

5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.)

But a Jew may be ready farther to object and 5 say, "*if our unrighteousness recommend the* "*righteousness of God*,[d] and illustrate his per- "fections in that way of becoming righteous "by faith, which he now ordains; *what shall* "*we say*, and what are we to expect? *Is* not "*God unrighteous, who inflicteth* that *wrath*, "which it is well known you assert, he will "execute upon the whole Jewish nation for "rejecting it?" *I* now *speak as a man*, who had a mind to cavil at the gospel, might plead; and by no means express my own sentiments, as you may well imagine.

6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

No; *God forbid*, that I should harbour such 6 a thought, or allow such a consequence. *For how then should God judge the world?* With Abraham our father, I acknowledge him under the character of the Judge of all the earth; and maintain that he will always "do right," Gen. xviii. 25.

7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?

And as *for* such a caviller, he might 7 as well speak out, and say, "*If the truth of* "*God hath abounded to his own glory by means* "*of my lie*,[e] my falsehood and iniquity of any "kind; if he has taken occasion to over-rule "my offence to the accomplishment of his "word, and the honour of his administration; "*why am I* nevertheless *called into judgment* "*as a sinner*, and arraigned for that as a crime,

[c] *When thou art called into judgment.*] Elsner and Bos have abundantly shewn, that κρινεσθαι has this signification, (compare Acts xxv. 25; xxvi. 6.) and that νικαν, in such a connection, signifies *to carry the cause*. See Elsner, Observ. Vol. II. p. 18, 19; and Bos in loc.

[d] *The righteousness of God.*] Though the phrase be in itself ambiguous, I think Dr. Whitby has abundantly proved it has here the sense we give it.

[e] *If the truth of God*, &c.] The Prussian Testament renders this clause, "In the "mean time if my lie conduces to the "glory of God, by making the gran- "deur of this truth shine forth with "superior advantage," &c. This is the clear and genuine sense, but it is not consistent with the rule I generally follow, to deviate so far from the words of the original; and I mention it as a specimen of many liberties, in which I have declined following that version after attentive examination of it.

SECT. VI.

Rom. III. 8.

"which is attended with such happy conse- "quences?" [*And why may I not say*] (*as we are calumniated, and some* most injuriously *affirm, that we maintain*) "*let us do evil* things, "*that good* consequences *may come* from them?" You may easily see, that principles like these would justify the greatest crimes in the world, if they might be so over-ruled as to prove the occasion of good; and consequently, would so entirely confound the nature of good and evil, that I think it not worth while to argue with such persons; *whose condemnation is* indeed so apparently *just*,[f] that I leave them to be convinced and silenced by their own consciences; and only mention such a detestable principle, solemnly to warn you against it.

8 And not rather, as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come: whose damnation is just.

9 But to return from this long digression—If the question I mentioned before be repeated, and any say, "*What then*, upon the whole, *have* "*we* Jews *the advantage* of the Gentiles so far, "that in consequence of having these oracles "of God which we have received, the promises "which he will never fail to observe, and the "principles of righteousness, which he will "never himself violate in his conduct, we can "claim justification before God by virtue of "our obedience to his law?" *Not at all; for we have before proved that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin*, and have placed them as convict-

9 What then? are we better *than they?* no, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.

10 ed criminals at the Divine bar; *As it is written*,[g] (Psal. xiv. 1.) in a variety of passages which may be applied to the present occasion,

10 As it is written; There is none righteous, no not one:

[f] *Whose condemnation is just.*] I think this must imply, that there are certain rules which God has laid down for us, disobedience to which in any imaginable circumstances is universally a moral evil; even though the quantity of good arising from thence to our fellow-creatures should be greater than that arising from observing those rules. For if this be not allowed, there can be no shadow of force in the apostle's conclusion.

[g] *As it is written.*] These scriptures are collected from different parts of the Old Testament; but there are many editions of the Seventy in which they all stand together, in the xivth, or according to their order, xiiith Psalm; which has given some occasion to think, that other alterations may have been made in that Greek version, to render it more agreeable to the New Testament; though many passages might escape the notice of such as made this attempt, if it were really made. But it must have been, as we see in this instance it was, a fruitless one; considering how wide such copies were dispersed, and how different the religious sentiments of the persons with whom they were lodged. It seems much more reasonable, to account for the diversity we find between the original and quotations, by supposing the sense, rather than words, intentionally regarded; and some accidental alterations have happened since in the Hebrew copies, which in several places may make the difference greater than it originally was.

SECT. VI.

Rom. III. 11

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God:

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no not one:

13 Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips:

14 Whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitterness:

15 Their feet *are* swift to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery *are* in their ways;

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

" *There is none righteous, no not one; There* " *is none that understandeth* his duty and his " true interest; *there is none that seeketh after* " *God*[h], and constantly endeavoureth to secure " his favour. *They are all declined* from that 12 " moral rectitude, which is the glory of the " rational nature; *they are altogether become* " *useless* as the great end for which they were " made, so that *there is none that practiseth good,* " there is *not so much as one,* (Psal. xiv. 1—3; " liii. 1—3.) *Their throat* [*is*] noisome and 13 " dangerous as *an open sepulchre,* gaping to " swallow them up, or poison them with its in- " fected air; *with their tongues they have used* " the most mischievous *deceit;* and while they " make the fairest profession of friendship, *the* " mortal *venom of asps* [*is*] hid *under their lips,* " which utter the most infectious and fatal " slanders. (Psal. cxl. 3.) They are men 14 " *whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;* " (Psal. x. 7;) so that the most shocking pro- " phaneness mingles itself with that malignity " of heart towards their fellow-men, which " breathes in every word. *Their feet* [*are*] 15 " *swift* to run towards the places where they " have appointed *to shed* the *blood* of the inno- " cent. (Prov. i. 16, 18.) *Ruin and misery* 16 " [*are*] on the whole *in* all *their ways;* they " bring it upon others, and so, by an inevit- " able consequence, upon themselves at last. " *And* as for *the way of peace* and happiness, 17 " *they have not known* or regarded it, [Isa. lix. " 7, 8.) And to sum up all in one word, the 18 " great cause of all this degeneracy is, that " *the fear of God is not before their eyes,* but " they are utterly destitute of any true princi- " ple of religion, of any reverence and love to " the great and adorable Object of it." (Psal. xxxvi. 1.)

[h] *There is none that seeketh after God, &c.*] It is allowed that this passage only proves directly, what was the character of the Jews in David's time; but it plainly shews that the wrath of God was awakened against them, as well as others, for their sins: it proves also, that a general degeneracy might prevail among them, though by profession God's people; and it suggests a strong presumption, that if Israel in David's time, which was one of its best ages, was so bad, Gentile nations were still worse; and in all these views, it was much to the apostle's purpose to produce the passage. The like observation is in a great measure applicable to all the following quotations; as the paraphrase on ver. 19. suggests, or rather, as the apostle himself there evidently insinuates.

SECT. VI.

Rom. III. 19.

This, my brethren, is in general the sad character of mankind in their fallen state; and the representation is the more striking, as it is borrowed from the sacred writings. *Now we know, that what the law saith* in such passages as these, *it saith to those* that were *under the law*[i]; they do not immediately relate to the heathen, but contain the character of those that were at that time the professing people of God. And as most of these passages are borrowed from the writings of David, Solomon, or Isaiah, it appears, that even in the best days of their state, they had a great deal of enormous wickedness among them. And if Israel, even at such a time, could not justify itself, much less can it be imagined that the idolatrous nations of the Gentiles should be able to do it: *so that every mouth must be stopped, and the whole world stand convicted before God*[k] as guilty, and acknowledge itself obnoxious to a dreadful sentence from his tribunal. Now I earnestly desire to bring every reader under a sense of this, as what is of the highest importance in order to receiving the gospel with becoming gratitude and joy.

19 Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHO can read this melancholy picture of human nature copied by the hand of an apostle from the lines first drawn by inspired prophets, without deep humility, and lamentation? To this was it sunk, that there was none righteous, no not one; none disposed to seek after God, or to cultivate his fear. And from this bitter root, the apostasy of our nature from God, what detestable fruit proceeds! The throat which is like an open sepulchre, the deceitful tongue, the envenomed lips, the malicious heart, the murderous hand! And who can wonder, that such rebels to their heavenly Father should sometimes prove ruffians to their brethren!

Verse 10, 11 18 13, 14

Let us bless God that we have been preserved from falling into such enormities, and from falling by them. His grace has restrained us from sinning against him in such an aggravated manner; his providence has guarded us from those whose feet are

[i] *What the law saith.*] It appears here, that this word *law* doth sometimes signify the Old Testament in general; for not one of the quotations above is taken from the pentateuch,

[k] *Stand convicted before God.*] So ὑπόδικος τῳ Θεῳ seems exactly to signify. Archbishop Tillotson would render it, liable to Divine justice; which is the same in sense. See his Works, Vol. 1. p. 126.

swift to shed blood, and in whose paths there is destruction and misery.

SECT. VI.

Let us remember the view in which these instances were brought, even to evince this deplorable, but undeniable truth, that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin. The purpose of conviction therefore being answered on our hearts, let us humble ourselves before God, as those that stand guilty in his presence, and obnoxious to his judgment.

Verse 15, 16 19

Thankfully let us own the inestimable goodness of God in having favoured us with his sacred oracles, and endeavour to improve in the knowledge of them. Thus instructed, let us be careful to form the most honourable notion of God, as the worthy and universal Judge, who will never fail to do right; and may these views of him produce an abhorrence of every thing evil which must necessarily be displeasing to him. Nor let us ever allow ourselves to be brought under the influence of those fallacious and pernicious maxims which would persuade us, that the goodness of the intention sanctifies the badness of the action; or that the pretended benevolence of the end will justify irregularities in the means. God's judgment and decision is final; and an inspired apostle's authority is an answer to a thousand subtilties, which might attempt to turn us from the strictest rules of that immutable rectitude on which it always proceeds.

2 6 8

SECT. VII.

From the representation made above, of the guilt and misery of mankind, the apostle deduces the necessity of seeking justification by the gospel, and consequently the excellency of that dispensation, as exhibiting the method of it. Rom. III. 20, *to the end.*

ROMANS III. 20.

THEREFORE by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the

ROMANS III. 20.

I HAVE just been proposing to you convincing evidences of the universal degeneracy and corruption of mankind, and shewing you, that the whole world must stand convicted before God: *therefore* let all my readers be persuaded to admit it, as a most certain principle, and at all times to act upon it, that according to the just and humble acknowledgment of the Psalmist, (Psal. cxliii. 2.) *no flesh shall be justified*, or pronounced righteous, *before him*,[a] *by works of*

SECT. VII.

Rom. III. 20

[a] *Be justified*, &c.] The learned Vitringa hath with great propriety observed, that this word is borrowed from Psal. cxliii. 2, and must therefore signify *to receive the testimony of being righteous from a judge*, and cannot merely signify *to ob-*

SECT. VII.

Rom. III. 20

complete obedience to *the law* of God,[b] whether natural or revealed. *For*, instead of justifying any man, it only anticipates, in a more obvious and affecting manner, the sense of his condemnation; as *by the law is the knowledge of sin*,[c] it discovers to us how grievous a thing it is, and exhibits the righteous displeasure of God against it.

law *is* the knowledge of sin.

21 *But* yet, blessed be God, every door of hope is not shut against the sinner, convicted by the law: for *the righteousness of God*, that is, the manner of becoming righteous, which God hath ordained and appointed in his gospel, *without* that perfect obedience which *the law* requires, *is now* made *manifest; being* indeed *attested by* the whole tenor of *the law and the prophets*,[d] which join in leading our eyes to the

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

tain mercy. To be justified, also sometimes signifies to *overcome in judgment*, Psal. li. 4, and the expression of being *just before God* implies the same. And that this is the sense of the word in this epistle, appears from several passages; particularly Rom. ii. 3. So that on the whole, as he argues, justification is not a phrase parallel to forgiveness, but refers to a judicial process, and carries in it the idea of acquittal, praise, and reward. And indeed it seems to me always ultimately to refer to the being pronounced, and treated as righteous, in the great day of God's universal judgment. See Rom. ii. 13, 16.

[b] *By works of the law.*] I think with Mr. Locke, that the word *law* must here be taken in this extent, comprehending ceremonial and moral, revealed and natural. And this I conclude, not so much from the omission of the article, (compare Rom. ii. 12, 14, 25, 27; chap. iii. 31; chap. v. 13, 20; in all which places, and many more, νομος without the article signifies the *Mosaic law*, as the sense evidently proves,) but from the conclusion which the apostle draws, and the whole tenor of his subsequent argument; which would have very little weight, if there were room to object, though we cannot be justified by our obedience to the law of Moses, we may be justified by our obedience to God's natural law. And nothing can be more evident, than that the premises, from which this conclusion is drawn, refer to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and consequently, that *law* has here, and in many subsequent passages, that general sense.—A very learned person has lately proposed to render εξ εργων νομου *by the law of works*, pleading βαπτισμων διδαχης (Heb. vi. 2,) as a parallel instance; but I have declined this rendering, as (ver. 27,) the apostle expresses the *law of works* by words placed in a different order, νομου των εργων, opposed to νομου πιστεως, and (ver. 28) χωρις εργων νομου is plainly, as we render it, *without the works of the law;* as the continuation of the apostle's argument, in reference to Abraham shews. Nor can I see what great end could be served by allowing this criticism; since the apostle elsewhere asserts *justification* χωρις εργων *without works*, (chap. iv. 6.) And to say that εργων is put elliptically for νομου εργων (that is, *works* for the *law of works*,) is very arbitrary. Nor can I conceive that any one can be justified by the *law of works*, without being justified *by the works*, or *vice versa*; and this is expressly Paul's assertion, chap. iv. 4, 5.

[c] *By the law is the knowledge of sin.*] This strongly implies the broken and disjointed state of human nature, in consequence of which the precepts which God gives us, will, on the whole, only serve to convict us of guilt, but not to produce an obedience by which we can finally be acquitted and accepted. Some render it, *the law takes cognizance of sin.*

[d] *Attested by the law and the prophets.*] See in this view, Gen. xv. 6; Isa. liii. *ult.* Dan. ix. 24.

SECT. VII.

Rom. III. 22

22 Even the righteousness of God, *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference:

great Messiah: *Even the righteousness of God,* which he hath appointed us to seek, *by the* exercise of a living *faith* on the power and grace *of* his Son *Jesus Christ;* to whom he commands us to commit our souls, with all humble and obedient regard. This way of obtaining righteousness and life is now, I say, made manifest *to all, and,* like a pure, complete, and glorious robe, is put *upon all them that believe;* whether they were, or were not, acquainted with, or subject to, the Mosaic law before their conversion to Christianity: *for there is* in this respect *no difference* at all between one believer and another.

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:

23 *For all have sinned,* as we demonstrated above, *and come short of the glory of God,*[e] they have failed of rendering him that glory that was so justly his due, and thereby have not only made themselves unworthy the participation of glory and happiness with him, but stand exposed to his severe and dreadful displeasure;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ:

24 *And* if any escape it, they are such, as being induced to embrace the gospel, *are justified freely* without pretending to plead any merit of their own, *by his* rich and sovereign *grace,* proposed there *by virtue of that redemption* and *deliverance which is in Christ Jesus* his well beloved Son:

25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to de-

25 *Whom God hath* in his infinite mercy *proposed* and exhibited to us in the gospel,[f] *as a propitiation* through whom he may honourably discover himself as propitious to us, and converse favourably with us, as he did with Moses from the mercy-seat: an inestimable privilege, which we receive *by* virtue of *faith in his* atoning *blood,* with which the throne of God is, as it were, sprinkled over; as the propitiatory in the tabernacle was with the blood of the sin-of-

[e] *Come short of the glory of God.*] Mr. Fleming, and after him, if I mistake not, Lord Barrington, explains this, *falling short of God's glory,* as signifying *the loss of that lucid resemblance of the glorious Shechinah,* which they, after Mr. Joseph Mede, suppose our first parents to have worn in their primeval state. But if it were to be granted they had such a glory in that state, I cannot think it would have been natural to have called it God's glory, or to explain the word ὑστεροῦνται of *losing it,* which certainly signifies a deficiency of what might have been attained, rather than the loss of what is actually possessed. Compare Mat. xix. 20; 1 Cor. i. 7; Heb. iv. 1. chap. xii. 15.

[f] *Proposed.*] Some contend that προέθετο here signifies *to exhibit;* others, that it signifies, *to determine, intend,* or *fix upon.* (Compare Bos in loc. and Eph. i. 9, 11; Rom. i. 13.) I have chose the word *propose,* as having just the same ambiguity

SECT. VII.

Rom. III. 25

fering. (Lev. xvi. 15, 16.) And this is appointed *for a demonstration of his righteousness in the remission of sins*, which now appears to be accomplished without any reflection upon that awful attribute which might seem to have a claim so directly contrary to it; and this remission extends not only to the present, but former age, and to all the offences *which are* long since *past*, *according to the forbearance of God*, who has forborn to execute judgment upon sinners for their repeated provocations, in reference to that atonement which he knew should in due time

clare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 be made. He has, I say, proposed his Son *for a demonstration of his righteousness*, which now, *in this present* ever-memorable and signal *time*, is so wonderfully illustrated in the great transactions of our own age, intended for this purpose, *that he might be*, and appear *just*, *and* yet at the same time, without impeaching in any degree the rights of his government, *the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus*, whosoever he be,[g] that is, of every one who sincerely believes in him, and acquiesces in that method of salvation which God hath published by him, and established in his perfect obedience and meritorious sufferings.

26 To declare, I *say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Contemplate, I beseech you, this only way of redemption and acceptance, and say, *Where then* [*is*] *boasting* in our own righteousness, or on account of any other peculiar privileges? Or what reason can any who partake of these blessings, have to glory in themselves? You will easily see, that *it is* entirely *excluded.* And reflect farther, *by what law* is it excluded? [*By the law*] *of works?* By that of Moses, or any other law, promising life only to perfect obedience, and threatening all disobedience with inevitable death? By *no* means. This would leave a man all the little reason for boasting he could possibly have;

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay.

[g] *Just, and the justifier*, &c.] By *just*, Mr. Taylor would understand *merciful*, and Mr. Locke, *faithful to his promises*; but either of these makes but a very cold sense, when compared with that we have here given. It is no way wonderful that God should be merciful, or faithful to his promises, though the justifier of believing sinners; but that he should be just in such an act might have seemed incredible, had we not received such an account of the propitiation and atonement. But our explication is vindicated in a most masterly and unanswerable manner by the worthy author of an excellent tract, intitled, Christ the Mediator, p. 85, &c. to which I with great pleasure refer the reader.

but by the law of faith.

SECT. VII.

Rom III. 27.

even that he had acted perfectly right and well, and had all that excellence and worth of character which a being in his circumstances could attain. *But* if you suppose him to have recourse to the gospel, *by the law of faith* it must certainly be excluded, since the very constitution of that requires persons to acknowledge themselves sinners, and as guilty and indigent, to make an humble application to the free mercy of God in Christ for pardon, and every other blessing which is necessary to their final happiness.

28 Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

28 *We therefore are come to a conclusion* of this part of our argument, *that a man*, of whatever nation, profession, or character, *is justified by* a true, lively, and effectual *faith* in the gospel, *without the works of the law;* [h] that is, though destitute of any legal works, in consequence of which he could claim justification and life.

29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *Is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

29 And this naturally leaves room to add, [*Is God*,] who hath established such a method of justification, *the God of the Jews only, and not also of the Gentiles? Surely* he is the God *of the Gentiles too:* since it is very evident, that all claim from works being thus universally given up, the Jews and Gentiles must in this respect stand upon a level.

30 Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

30 *So that* [*it is*] *one God*, the same eternal and unchangeable Jehovah, *that will justify the* Jews, who have received *circumcision*, not by that, but *by faith; and* will justify the Gentiles too, who are still in their *uncircumcision, through* the same *faith;* and therefore demands the grateful love, and the new obedience of both.[i]

31 Do we then

31 Now while we maintain this method of justification and salvation, can it be said, that we derogate from the honour of God's justice or

[h] A lively and effectual faith, without works, &c.] By thus guarding the assertion we sufficiently see how very consistent it is with that of St. James, (chap. ii. 17, 23, 25,) who only in effect asserts, that no faith can suffice to our justification which is not in fact productive of obedience; and when the matter is thus stated, there is no appearance of contradiction.

[i] *One God who justifieth the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.*] Mr. Locke would render it, seeing God is one, and supposes it an allusion to the prediction. Zech. xiv. 9. that the Lord shall be one, and his name one; fulfilled by the publication of the gospel. But I think this supposed allusion far fetched, and see not any occasion for supposing ἐκ πίστεως *by faith*, and διὰ πίστεως *through faith*, to signify different things; nor can I see what different idea can here be affixed to them. L'Enfant renders it, *he will justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision by the same faith.*

SECT. VII. Rom. III. 31.

his law! *Do we set aside the law by faith*, as if it were a fault, or annihilate it, as if it were an useless thing? *God forbid*, that we should ever insinuate such a design, or entertain such a thought. *Nay*, on the contrary, *we* really *establish the law*[k], on a firmer foundation than ever, and place it in a juster and more beautiful point of light: for we shew also its honour displayed in the atonement as well as the obedience of Christ; and we make it of everlasting use, for attesting the truth, and illustrating the necessity of the gospel, as well as for directing the lives of men, when they profess to have received it; as we shall abundantly shew in the process of this discourse.

make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our whole souls rejoice in this glorious display of the Divine mercy, in so beautiful an harmony with Divine justice, in our redemption by Christ: to which the apostle in this section bears so noble a testimony. We are all become guilty before (Verse 20) God: so that if he should mark iniquity, no flesh living could be justified before him: let us therefore with all reverence and (21) esteem, and with all joy, embrace the righteousness of God, as (22) now attested by the law and prophets, by Christ and his apostles; (23) which shall be upon all believers without any difference: humbling ourselves deeply in the presence of God, as those who have sinned, and come short of his glory; and seeking to be (24) justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

(25) To him let us continually look, as the great propitiation; exercising faith in his blood, and rejoicing that those which seemed to our feeble apprehensions the most jarring attributes, are now (27) reconciled and glorified. Let us readily acknowledge that boasting is excluded; and in the grateful overflowings of our souls fall down before that throne whence pardons are dispensed, and confess, "that this act of grace is our only plea;" and that we must remain humble before God for ever, in a sense of the demerit of our sins, and the abundance of his mercy.

(29 30) Let Jews and Gentiles unite in thanksgivings to God, and in love to each other, as having been all involved in the same condemnation, and all partakers of the same compassion. And let (31) Christians remember, that God intended by this illustrious display

[k] *We establish the law.*] Some render it, *Nay, but we are the persons that observe the law;* which is a just and strong thought, (compare Rom. viii. 3, 4.) but I think not the proper signification of ιςωμεν.—For the justice of this inference, see Christ the Med. p. 90—96.

of grace, not to supersede, but to establish his law. May we therefore make it our concern, that not only the actions of our lives, but the sentiments of our hearts, be directed and determined by it; as it is now inforced by more powerful motives than when it appeared in its unallayed terrors.

SECT. VII.

SECT. VIII.

The Apostle here shews, that Abraham and David sought justification in such a way as the gospel recommends; that is, by faith. Rom. IV. 1—12.

ROMANS IV. 1.

WHAT shall we say then that Abraham, our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory, but not before God.

3 For what saith the scripture? Abra-

ROMANS IV. 1.

SECT. VIII. Rom. IV. 1.

I HAVE been observing to you, that we Christians, by maintaining the doctrine of justification by faith, instead of superseding and enervating, do indeed establish the Divine law; and assert in the most convincing manner both its authority and purity. For the illustration of this therefore, let us consider the important instance of Abraham, and the manner in which he was justified. *What then shall we say, that* the holy patriarch *Abraham, our* reverend *father, according to the flesh, hath found* effectual in this respect?[a] and to what must his justification and acceptance with God be ascribed? *For if* 2 *Abraham were justified by* circumcision, or by the merit of any other *works*, rather than by the free grace and mercy of God, then *he hath something in which he may glory;*[b] *but* it is certain, by what the sacred oracles express, that, though the behaviour of this celebrated person was indeed innocent, fair and honourable before men, *yet [he hath] not* any thing to boast *in the sight of God. For what saith the scripture* upon this 3

[a] *Hath found.*] Some would transpose the words, and render them, "*Shall we* "*say that our father Abraham hath found,* "that is, obtained justification and life, "*according to the flesh,* that is, by cir- "cumcision, and observing the carnal "rites of the Mosaic œconomy?" But when the natural order, and usual import of the phrase makes so easy and so good a sense, I can see no reason for admitting this construction. Raphelius shews, that Herodotus, and other authentic Greek authors use εὑρίσκω for *obtaining*, and that *by merit.* Annot. ex Herod. in Loc.

[b] *He hath something in which he may glory.*] This seems to intimate, that the Jews maintained not only the necessity, but the merit of the Jewish observances; else it might have been replied, that Abraham was indeed justified upon his being circumcised, but that it was by the grace of God, in freely annexing the promise of justification and life to such a rite.

SECT. VIII.

Rom. IV. 3.

head? (Gen. xv. 6.) *Abraham believed God,* "when he made him the promise of that miraculous and important Seed, *and* so *it was imputed to him,* or placed to his account, *for* "*righteousness,* or in order to his justification:" that is, God was pleased graciously to accept it, though he had not that complete and perfect righteousness which might in strict justice be demanded of every rational creature, as the only condition of his being acquitted at the Divine 4 bar. *Now to him who* thus *worketh* to the utmost extent of all that was required, *the reward* proportioned to that work *is not charged to account, as* matter *of grace,*[c] *but of debt;* and he may glory, at least in having diligently earned 5 it. (Compare chap. xi. 6.) *But to him who* in this sense *worketh not,* who can by no means pretend to have wrought all righteousness, *but* humbly *believeth on him who* declareth the freeness of pardoning grace, and by that *justifieth* even *the ungodly,* if he repent and return, the phrase used concerning Abraham may be applied with the strictest propriety, and it may be said, that *his faith is imputed to him,* or placed to his account *for righteousness,* or to the purpose of his being accepted and treated by God as righteous.

6 *And* [*this is*] very agreeable to what we read elsewhere; particularly *as David* (Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.) *describeth the blessedness of the man* who is accepted of God, whom he speaks "of as one "*to whom God,* according to the method of "proceeding we now maintain, *imputeth righteousness without* any supposition of, or regard to a former series of good *works,* supposed to have been performed by him." 7 For he expresses himself thus, "*Blessed are they* "*whose iniquities are pardoned, and whose sins* "*are,* as it were, *covered*[d] by the vail of Di-

ham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works;

7 *Saying,* Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered:

[c] *As of grace.*] Raphelius has shewn, that μισθον do not only signify *a reward of debt,* but also *a gift of favour;* and that the phrase μισθον δωρεην occurs in Herodotus; so that a reward of grace or favour is a classical as well as theological expression.—Could we be sure that Abraham was once an idolater, it would be some illustration of the apostle's reasoning here; but the validity of it by no means depends upon that fact.

[d] *Whose iniquity is pardoned, and whose sin is covered.*] Archbishop Leighton has so elegantly and beautifully illustrated these words, that I must beg leave to refer those of my readers that cannot use his Latin meditations on the xxxiid Psalm, to review the English translation

Rom. IV. 8.

8 Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

" vine mery: *Blessed is the man to whom* " *the Lord imputeth not sin.*" Which plainly implies, that sin had been committed by the best and happiest of men, and that it is matter of mercy and favour, that it is not charged to account, so that he should finally be condemned for it.

9 *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

9 *Now* while we are speaking of *this blessedness* of the pardoned and accepted sinner, give me leave to ask [*doth it come*] *upon the circumcision* [*only*,] *or also on the uncircumcision?* The celebrated instance we have just been mentioning will shew how far circumcision is from being necessary to a share in it. For [*when*] *we say*, as above, *that faith was imputed to Abraham for righteousness;*[e]

10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

10 *How* and when *was it thus imputed*, and charged to his account, in this view? *When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?* [*Truly*] the history plainly shews us, that it was *not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision;* for it relates this important circumstance of Abraham, as taking place many years before circumcision was instituted.[f]

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he

11 *And* it assures us, that *he received the sign of circumcision*, not as the means of making him acceptable to God when he was not before so, but as the token of his being already accepted; and therefore as *the seal of the righteousness of* that *faith which he had in uncircumcision:*[g] *that*

of it in the 2d volume of his Expository Discourses; printed at Edinburgh, 1748.

[e] *Imputed to him for righteousness.*] I think nothing can be easier, than to understand how this may be said in full consistence with our being justified by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, that is, our being treated by God as righteous, for the sake of what he has done and suffered: for though this be the meritorious cause of our acceptance with God, yet faith may be said to be imputed to us, εις δικαιοσυνην, *in order to our being justified* or becoming righteous; that is, according to the view in which I have elsewhere more largely stated it, as we are charged as debtors in the book of God's account, what Christ has done, in fulfilling all righteousness for us, is charged as the grand balance of the account; but that it may appear, that we are, according to the tenor of the gospel, intitled to the benefit of this, it is also entered in the book of God's remembrance, "that we are believers:" and, this appearing, we are graciously discharged, yea, and rewarded, as if we ourselves had been perfectly innocent and obedient. See my Sermons on Salvation by Grace, p. 14—19, which account is perfectly agreeable to what Witsius has remarked. Oecon. Fœd. lib. iii. chap. viii. § 36.

[f] Many years before circumcision was instituted.] It is said this imputation was made on Abraham's believing the promise, Gen. xv. 6, about a year before the birth of Ishmael; but he did not receive circumcision till Ishmael was thirteen years old, Gen. xvii. 27, consequently, Abraham was declared justified at least fourteen years before he was circumcised

[g] *Seal of the righteousness of faith.*] This seems an incontestable proof, that

SECT. VIII.

Rom. IV. 11.

so he might be the father of all those who believe in uncircumcision, that righteousness may also be imputed unto them, that they may be justified in the same means, and that it may be written down in the book of God's remembrance, 12 that they are so. *And* he received this right by divine appointment, that he might also be *the father of the circumcision,* that is, *to those who* should afterwards practise it, and *were not only* partakers of the external ceremony *of circumcision,* which in itself indeed can have no efficacy; *but* shall also *walk in the footsteps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had in uncircumcision,* and which rendered him so dear to God while he was in that state.

might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised: that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised.

IMPROVEMENT.

If there be indeed such a thing as happiness to be enjoyed by mortal man, it is the portion of that man of whom David speaks, (Verse 7, 8) even of him whose iniquity is pardoned, and whose sin is covered, and who enjoys the manifestation of that pardon. Well may he endure the greatest afflictions of life with cheerfulness, and look forward to death with comfort; when the sting of all these evils is taken out, and the returning tokens of the Divine favour convert them into blessings. O let us earnestly pray that this happiness may be ours: that the great and glorious Being whom by our sins we have offended, and in whom alone the right and power of pardon resides, would spread the vail of his mercy over our provocations, and blot them out of the book of his remembrance!

Let us on the one hand fix it in our mind, that it is the character of that man to whom this blessedness belongs, that in his spirit there is no guile; and on the other, let us often reflect, that it is in consequence of a righteousness which God imputes, and which faith receives and embraces. We are saved by a scheme that allows us not to mention any works of our own, as (1, 2) if we had whereof to glory before God, but teaches us to ascribe our salvation to believing on him who justifieth the un(5)godly. Nor need we be ashamed of flying to such a method to (1, 2) which Abraham the father of the faithful had recourse himself, and on which he built his eternal hope. May we share his disposition of mind, that we may inherit the same promises; walk(12)ing in the footsteps of our father Abraham. So shall we also be

circumcision was a seal of the covenant of grace, and not merely of temporal promises; and consequently obviates the most considerable objection that hath ever been urged against infant-baptism.

called the friends and children of God, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in his heavenly kingdom.

SECT. VIII.

SECT. IX.

In order to recommend the scheme of justification, by believing God's promises, the Apostle shews that it was an illustrious act of faith, which entailed everlasting honours on the great patriarch Abraham; in which he was intended for an example to us. Rom. IV. 13, *to the end.*

ROMANS IV. 13.

FOR the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

14 For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

15 Because the law

ROMANS IV. 13.

SECT. IX.

Rom. IV. 13

I HAVE spoken of Abraham as the father of uncircumcised believers, as well as those of the circumcision, (ver. 11, 12,) and that with evident propriety; *for the promise to Abraham, and his seed, that he should be heir of the world*[a], that is, that he should inherit all the nations of the earth, as a seed that should be blessed in him, *was not*, and could not be *by the law* of circumcision, or of Moses; being, as we have already observed, prior to both; *but* it was *by the righteousness of faith.* God gave him that promise on his exerting a remarkable act of faith, on which God in the most gracious and honourable manner declared his acceptance of him as righteous. 14 *Now if they who are of the law,* and depend upon that alone, [*are*] *heirs*, exclusive of all others, (as some so eagerly contend,) then that *faith*, which in the instance before us was so eminently honoured of God, *is made useless*, and treated as a thing of no value: *and* so *the promise* made to it is in effect *abrogated*, the performance of it being put, not only on new conditions, but on such as cannot be perfectly performed in this sinful state[b]. 15 *For the law*

[a] *Heir of the world.*] Κοσμος cannot here signify, as γη sometimes does, one *country*, or *land*, how fine or large soever. It must therefore imply his inheriting a seed out of all nations, whom he might be said to possess, in such a sense, as children are said to be an heritage, Psal. cxxvii. 3. Compare Gen iv. 1; Prov. xvii. 6. See also Psal. lxxxii. 8, where God is said to inherit the nations that are taken into his family on the profession of the true religion.

[b] Cannot be perfectly performed.] This is here said with reference to a moral impossibility. It seems evident from what follows, that the law is to be considered as insisting on an obedience absolutely perfect; so that these good men who were justified under it, were not justified by it, but by the dispensation

SECT. IX.

Rom. IV. 15.

of God, considered in itself alone, and without any regard to that grace, which, though it was in fact mingled with it, yet makes no part of the legal dispensation as such; is so extensive and difficult, and we are so weak and sinful, that in fact, instead of securing to us the promised blessings, it only *worketh wrath*, that is, it becomes to us accidentally an occasion of wrath, and exposes us to punishment as transgressors; *for where there is no law*, either revealed or intimated, [*there is*] *no transgression;* but the multiplication of precepts increases the danger of offending, and the clearer declaration of those precepts aggravates the guilt attending the violation.

worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

16 But *therefore* [*it*,] that is, the promise, and the inheritance to which it relates, [*is*] *of faith*, or annexed to it, *that it* [*might be*] *of grace*, that God might magnify the riches of his grace in proposing justification and life to us in a way that might in multitudes of instances be effectual; *that* so the blessing exhibited in *the promise might be* firm, and *secure to all the* believing *seed; not only to that* part of his descendants *which was* placed under the dispensation *of the* Jewish *law*, who are not indeed excluded from it, if they seek it in a proper manner; *but to that which is* the seed of that holy patriarch, to whom the promise was made, by a nobler relation, even by a participation *of the faith of Abraham, who is* in this view *the father*

16 Therefore *it is* of faith, that it *might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all;

17 *of us all: As it is written*, (Gen. xvii. 16,) *I have made thee a father*, not of one family alone to descend from Isaac, or Jacob, but *of many nations;* so that he is in some degree even *like God* himself[c], who is the Father of all good men; like that Almighty Being, *in whom he believed, as re-animating those who are dead, and calling* into action and enjoyment *things that are not* now in existence, with the same ease *as those that are*[d].

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were:

18 And since I have begun to touch upon it, permit me, my brethren, to animate your faith, by

18 Who against

of grace under which Abraham was, which, though not a part of the covenant of God by Moses, was not, and could not be, abrogated by it. Compare Gal iii. 17.

[c] *Like God.*] So I think κατεναντι may here signify; and accordingly it is rendered, *ad instar Dei* by Paræus.

[d] *Calling things that are not.*] That this is to be understood of summoning them, as it were, to rise into being, and appear before him, Elsner has well proved on this place.

hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

SECT. IX.

Rom. IV. 18.

dilating a little farther upon that of this illustrious patriarch. It was he, *who against* all human and probable *hope*, *believed with* an assured and joyful *hope*, on the security of the Divine word, *that*, unlikely, as it seemed, *he should be a father of many nations*, *according to that which was spoken* to him, (Gen. xv. 5,) when he was called to take a view of the stars of heaven, and God said, " *So* numerous and glorious *shall thy* " *seed be*." *And* having received such a promise, *not being feeble in faith*, how feeble soever he might be in his animal constitution, *he considered not his own body*, which with regard to the probability of begetting children was *now dead*, *being about an hundred years old: nor the deadness of Sarah's womb*, of whom the sacred historian tells us, " that it ceased to be with " her after the manner of women;" (Gen. xviii. 11.) Amidst all these difficulties and discouragements, *he objected not to the promise of God through unbelief*, *but was strengthened by* the exercise of the most vigorous and triumphant *faith*, thereby *giving* a due and becoming *glory to* the great *God*, the Lord of universal nature; *And was* confidently *persuaded*, *that what he had* thus graciously *promised*, *he was*, and ever is, *able to perform*, though that performance should to sensible view seem ever so improbable. *And therefore* this heroic faith was so acceptable to the Divine Being, that *it was*, as we have heard again and again, *imputed*, or accounted *to him for righteousness*, that is, in order to his justification. *Neither was it written* in the sacred records, which are to reach the remotest ages, *with regard to him only*, or chiefly to do a personal honour to that illustrious patriarch, *that it was* thus *imputed to him; But* also *for our sakes*, *to whom it*, that is, the like faith, *shall also be imputed*, *if we* steadily *believe in him who* not only brought Isaac as from the dead womb of Sarah, but, in the most literal sense, *raised Jesus our Lord from the dead*, when he lay among them slain and mangled by his cruel enemies. Even that great and glorious Redeemer, *who was delivered* up to them by the determinate counsel of God, that by his death and sufferings he might atone *for our* many

19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb.

20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

21 And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

25 Who was delivered for our of-

SECT. IX.

offences, and when he had fully satisfied the Divine justice for them [e], was *raised again for our justification*: that putting our trust in him, who was thus apparently discharged from all farther claim upon him, as our surety we might obtain, by virtue of our relation to him, plenary pardon and eternal life.

Rom. IV.25.

fences, and was raised again for our justification.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us continually bear in our mind the great and venerable example of our father Abraham: labour to the utmost to trace his steps; and have faith in God, who at his pleasure *quickeneth the dead, and calleth things which are not as if they were.* Verse 17 If sense were to judge, it would pronounce many of these difficulties invincible, which lie in the way of the accomplishment of 20 his promises; but they shall all be fulfilled in their season. Let us therefore be strong in faith, remembering that thus it becomes us to glorify that God who condescends so far as to engage the honour of his word for the support of our souls. He who *hath promised is able to perform, for with him all things are possible.* Already hath he done that for us which we had much less reason 25 to expect, than we now have to hope for any thing that remains. He delivered his Son Jesus for our offences, to redeem us by his blood from final and everlasting ruin.

24 Let it be our daily joy that he was raised again for our justification; and let his resurrection be continually considered as a noble argument to establish our faith in him who performed 22,23 this illustrious work of power and mercy. So shall it be imputed to us likewise for righteousness; yea, so shall the righteousness of our Redeemer be reckoned as ours, to all the purposes 14,15 of our justification and acceptance with God. And though by our transgression of the law, we can never inherit by any claim from that, which only worketh wrath and condemnation in con-16 sequence of our breach of it; yet shall we, by believing and obeying the gospel, find the promise sure to us, as the spiritual seed of Abraham, and be for ever happy in the enjoyment of that better Canaan; when every earthly inheritance shall be no more found.

[e] Fully satisfied the Divine justice for them.] By satisfying the Divine justice, "I mean, doing all that was necessary, "amply and perfectly to secure the honour of the Divine government, in "the pardon and acceptance of penitent "and believing sinners;" but I do not mean "the payment of the debt, in "such a sense as that our engagements "to holiness should be dispensed with, "or in any degree weakened, or our obligation to the free grace of the Father in our salvation transferred or "enervated" And I desire it may be remembered, and attended to throughout, that this is the sense in which I would use the phrase wherever it occurs in any of my writings, and I hope it will not be found that I have ever deviated from it.

SECT. X.

The excellency of the gospel-dispensation is farther illustrated: believers being hereby brought into so happy a state, as turns even the heaviest afflictions of life into an occasion of joy. Rom. V. 1—11.

ROMANS V. 1.

THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace

ROMANS. V. 1.

SECT. X. Rom. V. 1

WE have been reviewing the manner in which Abraham and David, those illustrious patriarchs looked for justification and happiness, and in which we are to seek it, if we desire to succeed. We have been speaking of our adorable Saviour, as delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Let us now *therefore* reflect a little on those invaluable benefits, which we who have embraced this dispensation, whether Jews or Gentiles enjoy in consequence of it. And here it is in the first place evident, that *being* thus *justified by* means of *faith* in Christ, *we have peace with God.*[a] Our guilty fears are silenced, and we are taught to look up to him with sweet serenity of soul, while we no longer conceive of him as an enemy, but under the endearing character of a friend and a father; even *through* the mediation and grace of *our Lord Jesus Christ: By* 2 *whom we have been introduced*[b] *by means of*

[a] *We have peace with God.*] It seems very unreasonable to suppose, that when the apostle wrote such passages as this, and Eph. i. 1—3. he should mean to exclude himself, who was no Gentile; they are not therefore to be expounded, as spoken particularly of the Gentiles: nor could he surely intend by these grand descriptions and pathetic representations, to speak only of such external privileges as might have been common to Simon Magus, or any other hypocritical and wicked professor of Christianity. And if he did not intend this, he must speak of all true Christians as such, and as taking it for granted, that those to whom he addressed this, and his other epistles, were in the general such, though there might be some few excepted cases which he does not think it necessary often to touch upon. And this is, after all, the true key to such passages in his epistles, and as such, I have used it throughout my work; and as I have more particularly stated and vindicated it in the postscript which I have added to the preface of my Sermons on Regeneration, in the second edition, I must beg leave to refer my reader thither, and hope I shall be excused from a more particular examination of that very different scheme of interpretation, which Mr. Taylor has so laboriously attempted to revive. The main principles of it are, I think, well confuted by my pious and worthy friend Dr. Guyse, in the preface to his Paraphrase of this Epistle.

[b] *We have been introduced,* την προσαγωγην εσχηκαμεν.] Raphelius has shewn from Herodotus, that προσαγωγη is often used as a sacerdotal phrase, and signifies, being with great solemnity introduced, as into the more immediate presence of a deity in his temple, so as by a supposed interpreter, from thence called προσαγωγευς, *the introducer,* to have a kind of conference with such a deity."

SECT. X.

Rom. V. 2

faith into that state of *grace* and acceptance *in which we* now *stand* with humble boldness in his presence, and cheerful confidence, that nothing shall remove us from his favour. *And* by a farther consequence, we do not only rejoice in some considerable present privileges, but *boast in* a pleasant and assured *hope* of inheriting at length *the glory of God;* a state of perpetual splendour and happiness in the house and presence of our heavenly Father, in which he will as it were, adorn us with the rays of his own 3 glory. *And not only* do we so boast in this hope, *but we also glory in our tribulation*[c] and affliction, which far from esteeming, as the Jews are ready to do, any token of reprobation or displeasure, we look upon as being, in this connection, the allotment of God's paternal love to us; that we may thereby be enabled to do him a more singular honour, and be prepared for a more exalted happiness; *knowing that tribulation*, under the influence of Divine grace, *worketh* a calm, silent, humble *patience*, a most beautiful and happy disposition of mind, which 4 is daily strengthened by exercise. *And* this *patience* produceth such an *experience* of God's supporting goodness, and such proof of our own sincere faith,[d] strict integrity, and steady resolution, for him, as we are sure will be acceptable to him; *and* therefore this *experience* and proof of our graces, which like pure gold brighten in the furnace, worketh a more lively and triumphant *hope* of a glorious future re-5 ward. *And* this *hope*, sublime and confident as it is, *does not shame* and confound [*us*] with disappointment; yea we know it cannot, *because* we have already within ourselves the very beginning of that heaven at which it aspires. For *the love of God*, in the perfection of which the blessedness of that celestial world

wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience.

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5 And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of

[c] *We glory also in tribulation.*] The Jews might object to the persecution of Christians, (as we know they did to that of their Master,) as inconsistent with what they concluded would be the state of the people of the Messiah. It is therefore with great propriety, that the apostle so often discourses on the benefit arising from the sufferings of true believers, by which he lays in the strongest answer to any such insinuation. And this delicacy of address is so apparent in many passages of the epistles, that I should swell the notes too much, if I were accurately to trace it.

[d] Proof of our faith.] Mons. Saurin very justly observes, that the word δοκιμη has this signification, and in a metaphor, taken from gold proved by purifying fire. Compare 1 Pet. i. 7; see Eccles. ii. 5. Saur. Serm. Vol. VII. p. 159.

SECT. x.

Rom. V 5

And [illegible] shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us

consists, as in a plentiful effusion, *poured into our hearts by his Holy Spirit, which is given unto us*, and enables us to see his love amidst all his corrections, and to delight ourselves daily in him, though for the present he appoint us trials which may seem ever so rigorous

6 For when we were [illegible] without strength, [illegible] time Christ [illegible] for the ungodly

Now all these invaluable privileges and hopes, which make our lives so joyful amidst such various tribulations and extreme sufferings, are to be traced up to the death of Christ, and resolved into his love, *for when we were yet* in a *weak* and languishing, infirm and helpless state, destitute of all these Divine principles and hopes; yea incapable of delivering ourselves from the depths of guilt and misery, into which we were plunged, *Christ* most *seasonably died* for us, even *in the stead of the ungodly*[e], for Jews and Gentiles, when they were, as we have proved before, all under sin

7 [illegible] will

Now this is a most memorable thing, and worthy our frequent, attentive, and affectionate consideration For *scarcely would one* be willing to *die in the stead of a righteous man*, though we apprehended him in the most immediate danger, [for] *perhaps in the stead of a* remarkably good and benevolent *man*[f], *one would even dare to*

[illegible] *ing* [illegible] by [illegible] understands [illegible] included, [illegible] inconsistent with the [illegible] apostle's argument [illegible] the preceding chapters, to confine it to them (Compare chap iii 9—20 22, [illegible] therefore all along [illegible] in the most extensive [illegible] and [illegible] nothing in the whole New Testament plainer, than that [illegible] supposes every human creature to whom it is addressed, to be in a state of guilt and condemnation, and incapable of being accepted with God, any otherwise than through the grace and mercy which it proclaims Compare John iii 16, [illegible], chap v, [illegible]; 1 John [illegible] [illegible], Mark xvi 15 [illegible] and especially 1 John [illegible] than which no assertion can be more positive and express [illegible] (Observ. [illegible]) has well proved that [illegible] should be rendered *[illegible]*, and Raphelius (Not ex Xen. in loc.) has abundantly demonstrated, that [illegible] may [illegible] signifies *he died in our room and stead*, nor can I find that [illegible] ever has ever any other signification than that of *[illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible] our own*, and the very next verse shews, independent on any other authority, how evidently it bears that sense here, as one can hardly imagine any one would die for a good man, unless it were to redeem his life by giving up his own How much higher not only Grotius, but Le Clerc, carried their explications of this great doctrine, than some moderns have done, may be seen by consulting Grotius's gloss on 1 Pet ii [illegible], (de Satisf cap ix) and Le Clerc on John i 29

[e] *Now* [illegible]. It is very evident that [illegible] cannot have the force of an illative particle here, or in the preceding verse, and it is hardly possible to number all the passages in Paul's writings, to which the like remark may be applied

[f] *Righteous,—good.*] It is true, that in one sense *righteousness* must include *goodness*, as we owe to every man a benevolent affection, and are bound in duty to God to do all the good we can to the

SECT. V.

Rom. v. 8.

die: for certainly it is but here and there one, in a great multitude, who would be willing to redeem the most eminently useful life at the price of his own. *But God hath recommended his* astonishing *love towards us*, and set it off as it were with this grand circumstance of high embellishment, if I may so speak, *that when we were yet sinners*, and therefore not only undeserving of his favour, but justly obnoxious to wrath and punishment, *Christ died in our stead*, that our guilt might be cancelled, and we brought into a state of Divine acceptance. Since *therefore* it hath pleased the blessed God to give us such an unexampled display of his love as this, how high may our expectations rise, and how cheerfully may we conclude that *much more being now justified by* the efficacy of *his* most precious *blood, we shall be saved from wrath by him!* For we can never imagine that God would provide at so expensive a rate for our justification, and then finally leave us under wrath, though we have acquiesced in the scheme of his grace for our deliverance.

one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8 But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 *For if*, as I have already maintained, *when we were enemies*, through the perverseness of our minds, and the rebellion of our lives, *we were reconciled to God by the death of his own* dear *Son*, and if foreseeing we should fall into this state of hostility, he made this wonderful provision for our being admitted to terms of peace; *how much more being* thus *reconciled, shall we be saved* from misery, and made completely happy *by his* recovered *life*, now he is risen from the dead, and ascended to glory?

10 For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life.

whole human species. But he may in common speech be called a *just or righteous man*, who gives to every one what is by law his due: and he a *good or beneficent man* who voluntarily abounds in kind and generous actions, to which no human laws can compel him. Tully has the like distinction, (de Offic. lib. i. chap. x. edit. Pierc.) and it is admirably illustrated by Raphelius (Not. ex Xen. in loc.) by apposite quotations from other ancient writers. It may very possibly (as Godwyn has shewn in his Jewish Antiquities, lib. i. cap. [illegible].) bear some allusion to a distribution of mankind into the three classes, חסידים, צדיקים, and רשעים, *good men, righteous men*, and *sinners*, which some rabbinical writers mention.—All the beauty and grace of this passage is lost by reading ἀδίκου instead of δικαίου, as the editor of the new version of 1797 does; without, as I can find, any single authority: *for a wicked man no one would willingly die, though for a benefactor some have readily offered to die.* And ἀγαθὸς does not signify merely a *personal benefactor*, but in general a *benevolent man*

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. X. Verse 1

WITH what extasies of holy joy may we justly survey these inestimable privileges, the blessed consequences of having embraced the gospel, and being justified by faith unfeigned! How great a happiness to have peace with God, with that omnipotent Being, who can at pleasure arm all nature against us, or for us! To *have access to him by Jesus Christ*, and daily converse 2 with him as *our Father in heaven!* To rejoice in an assured hope of enjoying glory with Christ, in his presence, yea, of enjoying the God of glory! To see all affliction not only disarmed, but turned into matter of triumph, *while tribulation worketh experience, patience, and hope!* 3, 4 So may all our tribulations work, and be they ever so severe, they will be reasons for our joy and praise. The pain of them will soon be over, the happy consequences of them will be as lasting as our immortal souls.

Let us endeavour to dilate our hearts, that we may receive 5 the largest *effusions of the love of God, to be shed abroad* there. The love of God! That plant of paradise, which will spring up unto eternal life. And to excite it, let us be daily meditating upon the rich wonders of redeeming love and grace, adoring 6 that seasonable interposition of Divine mercy, that when we were weak and guilty creatures, when we lay for ever helpless under a sentence of everlasting condemnation, that is, when we appeared thus in the eyes of him *who beholdeth things which are* 7 *not as if they were, Christ died for us*, and gave a token of his love even for the worst of sinners, which few among the children of men are willing to give, with respect to the most upright and benevolent of their brethren. Since the love of God comes thus recommended, let us cordially embrace it, and awaken all the powers of our souls with diligent care to secure the happy fruits, that we may not *receive the grace of God in vain.* If we do indeed experience in ourselves, not only that there is a foundation laid for our reconciliation, but that we are actually *reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, our hopes may rise high, that we 10 *shall much more obtain* consummate *salvation by his life*. For surely it is infinitely more astonishing, that the Son of God should die to reconcile enemies, than that having subdued their hearts by his dying love, and received them to friendship as the purchase of his blood, he should employ his recovered life and extensive authority for their protection, and complete salvation.

SECT. XI

The Apostle shews, that the calamities brought by the first Adam on his seed, are repaired with glorious advantage to all who by faith become interested in the second Adam. Rom. V. 11, *to the end.*

ROMANS V. 11.

SECT. x. Rom. V. 11.

I HAVE been breathing out our hopes, and our joys, as we are Christians, and are taught by the principles of our divine religion to rejoice, not only in the prospect of glory, but even in tribulation itself. *And* now I must add, that it is *not only* [*so*] *but* that there is another grand consideration, which, though not yet mentioned, lies at the root of all our confidence and happiness, which is this, that *we boast in God* as invariably our covenant God and Father *through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom we have now,* in these last times, *received the* great and important *reconciliation,*[a] which not only averts the terrors of his wrath, but opens upon us all the blessings of his perpetual friendship and love.

ROMANS V. 11. AND not only *so,* but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

12 And *therefore*[b] we may from these premises infer, that the benefit which we believers receive from Christ,[c] is equal to the detriment we receive from Adam, yea, is on the whole greater than that, for we now obtain righteousness and life from one; *as by one man,* that is, Adam, the common father of the human species, *sin entered into the* new made *world, and death,* before unknown in the creation of God, *entered by sin, and so death passed* on from one generation to another *upon all men; unto which all*

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

[a] *Received the reconciliation.*] The word καταλλαγη here has so apparent a reference to κατηλλαγημεν and καταλλαγεντες in the preceding verse, that it is surprising it should have been rendered by so different a word in our version, especially as it is so improper to speak of our *receiving an atonement,* which God receives as made for our sins.

[b] *Therefore.*] Δια τουτο certainly [illegible] [illegible] *in this respect*, but there are some instances even among the texts collected by Mr Taylor here, in which it may as well be rendered *therefore*: particularly Mat. xiii. 13, John ix. 23, chap. xv. 18, chap. xvi. 2, 1 Cor. iv. [illegible] 1 Thess. xi. 30, Eph. i. 15. In all which places our rendering seems preferable to what he would propose.

[c] *We believers.*] As this 12th verse is an inference from the 11th, it seems evident that they only are spoken of, for it is plain from comparing the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses with the first, that it is only they *who are justified by faith, who have peace with God, and who joy in him by Christ, as having received the reconciliation.* And this obvious remark clears the following passage of difficulties, which would be exceeding great, if it were to be considered without regard to this connection; and which have in fact misled many commentators, who for want of attending to it, have plunged themselves and their readers into great perplexity, and given a sense to the paragraph, of which it is by no means capable.

Rom. V. 13

13 For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

have sinned in him,[d] that is, they are so far involved in the consequence of his first transgression, as by means of it to become obnoxious to death. And that this was indeed the case, and this offence the engine of mortality in the whole human species, we may infer from one very obvious fact, I mean the death of infants, from the very beginning; *for* from the fall of Adam *unto* the time when God gave *the law* by Moses, as well as after it, *sin was*, and appeared to be *in the world*, by the continual execution of its punishment, that is, death. *But* it is a self-evident principle, that *sin is not*, and cannot be *imputed*, *where there is no law;* since the very essence of sin is the violation of a law. And consequently, if we see in fact that sin was imputed, we must conclude that the persons to whose account it appears to have been charged, were under some law *Nevertheless*, it is certain *death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over* infants as well as others, over *those*, I say, *who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam*,[e] that is, who had never in their own persons offended God, as Adam their father did; *who*, with respect to the extent of his actions to all his seed, *was the figure*, or model[f] *of him who was to come*,[g] that is, a kind

14 Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

[d] *Unto which all have sinned: ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον.*] Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. ?t.) would render it, *on account of whom;* and he produces some remarkable authorities for it, (compare Phil. iii. 12, Rom. x. 19, chap xvii. 19, 1 Thess. iii. 7;) but I think those produced by Mr. Taylor, (from Gal v. 16, Eph ii. 19; 1 Thess. iv. 7, 2 Tim ii. 14,) with the use of the particles in some of the purest Greek classics, sufficient to support his rendering, which I have here followed. See his Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin Part I p 51, &c. Note.

[e] *Likeness of Adam's transgression.*] Mr. Locke and several more interpret this of the Gentiles, who did not sin against a *positive law*. But they might certainly have died for their transgression against the *natural law*, under which they were born, and for which the apostle expressly asserts, not only that they were in fact liable to perish, (chap. ii. 12, &c.) but that they knew they were worthy of death, (chap. i. ult.)

[f] *Figure*, or model.] That the word τύπος has this signification, will appear from Acts vii. 44; Rom vi 17, Phil iii. 17; 1 Thess. i 7; 2 Thess iii. 9, 1 Tim. iv. 12; Tit. ii. 7, Heb. viii 5, 1 Pet. v. 3.

[g] *Of him who was to come: τοῦ μέλλοντος.*] Here is evidently an ellipsis. Most commentators have explained it as referring to the great person that was to come, or in other words, *the future* [*Adam*,] that is, *Christ*. But Sir Norton Knatchbull would explain it of *mankind to come*. He thinks that Adam cannot with any propriety be called *a type of Christ* as the *type* of a thing is its *shape, model*, or *representation*, and therefore if the thing be good, the type of it must be so too. Dr. Milner, in vindication of this interpretation observes, that this will best agree with the apostle's design. For if Adam was to be considered as a public person, the type, figure, or representation of mankind, his conduct will, as the apostle says it does, affect infants. Dr. Milner's Fading Flowers of Life, p. 14.—But it may be sufficient to answer, that upon the common interpretation, there was plainly a correspondence between Christ and Adam, as each was a

SECT. XI.

of type of the Messiah, as being a public person and fœderal head.

Rom. V. 15. Yet I must observe by the way, that with respect to *the free gift* of God in the gospel dispensation, it [*is*] *not* exactly *as the offence*, nor limited in all respects as that is; *for if by the offence of one many died*, if the whole human family, numerous as it is, become obnoxious to death and destruction thereby, how *much more hath the free grace of God and the gift* [*which is granted*] *by* that *grace*, as manifested and displayed in that *one* greater and better *man Jesus Christ, abounded to many*, that is, to all the numerous family of believers.

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 *And* this in two very important respects. In the first place, *the gift* [*is*] *not* merely, *as* the ruin that came upon us *by one that sinned*, in respect to the number of offences in question; *for the sentence of* but *one* [*offence passed*] upon us *to condemnation*, and we were no farther affected by the subsequent sins of Adam, than by those of an intermediate parent: *but the gift* of Divine grace, exhibited in the gospel, [*is effectual*] *to* our *justification from* the guilt of *many offences*. It not only delivers us from the sentence to which we were from our birth liable on account of Adam's sin, but from that more grievous and dreadful sentence which we had brought upon ourselves in adult life by our innumerable and aggravated personal transgressions.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

17 *Moreover* there is another important article in which the grace of the gospel exceeds the seeming severity, which attended the imputation of guilt from our first father Adam; namely, that *if by one man's offence death reigned by one*, over all his posterity, as we observed above, *they who* thankfully and obediently *receive*[h] *the* overflowing *abundance of free grace, and of the*

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift

public head, though the influence of each on his respective account be different; so that the whole reasoning of both these learned and ingenious writers seems inconclusive.

[h] Thankfully and obediently *receive*.] It is so very plain, that the *abundant reign in life by Jesus Christ*, is appropriated to persons of a particular character, expressed here by *receiving the gift*, that it is surprising any should have spoken of it as common to the whole human race. And nothing is more evident than that the word λαμβανω has often this sense, and signifies accepting or embracing a benefit proposed, or a person offering himself under a character of importance. Compare John i. 11, 12; chap. iii. 11, 32, chap. v. 43; chap. xii. 48; chap. xiii. 20; Jam. v. 10; 1 John v. 9; 2 John 10, 3 John 7.

Rom. v. 17.

of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

munificent *gift of righteousness* exhibited in the gospel, *shall much more reign in life by* the *one* great Restorer and Recoverer of his seed, *even Jesus Christ:* that is, believers shall by him be brought to a much nobler and more excellent life than that from which Adam fell, and which they lost in him.

18 Therefore as by the offence of one, *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life.

18 *Therefore*, on the whole, you see as I begun to observe to you before,[j] that, *as* [*the consequence*] *of one offence*, on the one hand, [*extended*] *to all men*, *to* bring *condemnation* upon them, *so also*, on the other side, [*the consequence*] *of one* grand *act of righteousness* [*extended*] *to all men* who receive and embrace it; securing *to* them that *justification* which will be crowned with the enjoyment of eternal *life*.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

19 *For as by the disobedience of one man many were constituted sinners*, that is, became obnoxious to death, as if they themselves had sinned; *so by the* complete and persevering *obedience of one many shall be constituted righteous*,[k] that is, they shall be treated as such in the day of God's final account; though they have no perfect righteousness of their own to plead, in consequence of which they should stand before God, and claim the reward.

20 Moreover, the law entered, that the

20 *But* as for *the law* of Moses, that could not possibly procure this great benefit to them; for that *made a little entrance*,[l] that is, took place

[j] As I began to observe, &c.] This 18th verse seems connected with the end of the 12th, and all the intermediate verses do undoubtedly come in as a parenthesis; and the reader, by perusing the interwoven text alone, will observe, that these verses, viz. 12th, 18th, 19th, make one continued sentence. But I judged it necessary here, and elsewhere, to break the paraphrase into several sentences, lest the excessive length should have rendered the sense obscure, and the passage unwieldy and disagreeable. Many of Paul's sentences are, as they stand in the text, obscured by the length. Compare 2 Cor. xii. 14; chap. xiii.

[k] *Many shall be constituted righteous.*] To become liable to death for the offence of another, is indeed being thereby constituted a sinner, or treated as a sinner; since death is, in its primary view, to be considered as *the wages of sin*, or the animadversion of a righteous God upon it: But simply to be raised from the dead is not being made righteous, or treated as a righteous person; since it is a very supposable case, and will in fact be the case of millions, that a sinner may be raised in order to more condemnation and dreadful punishment. The whole interpretation therefore, which Mr Taylor has given of this text, in this view appears to me destitute of a sufficient foundation.

[l] *Made a little entrance.*] So παρεισηλθε properly signifies, and is well rendered by the Vulgate, *subintravit*; in which sense παρεισακτοι is used, Gal. ii. 4. Thus the partial and limited entrance of the law is distinguished from that universal entrance of sin, which passed on all, as Mr. Locke well observes. This I think preferable to Mr. L'Enfant's rendering it, *the law intervened*, that is, between Adam and Christ.

SECT. XI. Rom. V. 20.

among comparatively a very small number of mankind for a few ages, *that the offence might*, instead of being removed, *abound* much more than before, as in consequence of it many things became offensive to God, which were before indifferent, and the guilt of moral offences was aggravated by so express a declaration of the rule of duty, violated by them: so that on the whole, it seemed intended to convince and humble, rather than to justify. *Yet*, on the whole, God hath taken an occasion to glorify the riches of his mercy by that dispensation, and *where sin* has *abounded* under the most aggravating circumstances, *grace hath superabounded*, so as thereby to gain a superior and more illustrious

21 triumph: *That as sin had reigned in* the wide and universal devastation which *death* had made on those whom it had brought under that fatal sentence, *so grace might reign to* such a degree, as to bestow *eternal life* and happiness, *through* the glorious and complete *righteousness*[m] which we obtain *by Jesus Christ our Lord*, when we sincerely believe in him as our Saviour, and give up our souls to the authority of his equitable and auspicious government.

offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 11. LET us daily remember our relation to God by Christ Jesus, and glory in this relation; saying frequently, "He is indeed our "Father. This God, with all his adorable, unfathomable, immutable perfections, is our God. He will be our guide unto "death, and our portion for ever. *My soul shall make her boast* "*in the Lord.* What relation can be so honourable, what can "afford such an unfailing spring of perpetual joy!"

Let us honour him in all his dispensations, even those which may appear the most mysterious. In this number we are undoubtedly to reckon his constituting Adam the covenant-head of his posterity, and involving our life or death in him; yea, adjusting the relation so, that our spiritual state should be greatly affected by his conduct, and we should by his transgression become the heirs, not only of death, but of moral pollution, and ultimately by virtue of our descent from him, *be shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin.*

[m] *Grace might reign to eternal life through righteousness, &c.*] This trajection the sense absolutely requires.

It is a consideration which must carry awe and solemnity, grief and lamentation, throughout all ages, *that by one man sin entered into the world, and death* made such a progress *by* the entrance of *sin, as to pass upon all men* in consequence of that act O God, how terrible are thy judgments! and yet how rich thy compassion, in appointing the second Adam to repair the ruin and desolations of the first! Yea, more than to repair them, to deliver us from all our most aggravated transgressions, if we believe in him, and receive the gift of righteousness! to cause us to reign in life by him! to bring us to a more exalted and secure happiness than Adam himself enjoyed in the day in which he was created, or than Eden, the garden of God, could afford

SECT XI — Verse 12 — 17

Let us adore these super-aboundings of Divine grace, and its reign unto eternal life And let all our knowledge of the law of God, our distress under a sense of having broken it, and being thereby exposed to its condemning sentence, be considered as illustrating the riches of that grace whereby we are saved, and so animate us to returns of the humblest gratitude, and a persevering obedience. Amen. 20

SECT XII.

The Apostle shews, that the gospel, far from dissolving our obligations to practical holiness, does strongly increase them, which is a consideration tending highly to recommend it to the esteem and acceptance of all. Rom. VI 1—14.

ROMANS VI 1

ROMANS VI 1 WHAT shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

SECT XII — Rom VI 1

THUS we have asserted the doctrine of justification by faith, or in other words, of salvation by grace. And now let us consider how it is to be improved. *What shall we say then,* concerning the practical inferences to be drawn from it? [a] Shall we say, *Let us continue in the* habitual practice *of sin, that grace may abound* so much the more, in pardoning and saving us? *God forbid* that such an unworthy thought should ever arise in our hearts! We have disclaimed the consequence above, (chap. iii 7 8) and we most solemnly disclaim it again He,

2 God forbid how shall we, that are

2

[a] *What shall we say then,* &c.] The apostle here sets himself more fully to clear and vindicate his doctrine he taught, from the consequence suggested before, chap iii 7, 8 He had then only in strong terms denied, and renounced it but here removes the very foundation of it

SECT. XII.

Rom. VI. 2.

who are dead to sin,[b] we, who by our profession are under such sacred engagements to mortify it with the greatest care, *how shall we yet live in it?* Surely it were the grossest contradiction that can be imagined. On the contrary, it is apparent, that nothing has so great a tendency to animate us to avoid sin, and to enable us to conquer it, as this doctrine of gospel-grace.

3 *What*, Sirs, *know ye not*, and is it possible, that any of you should be ignorant of this great and obvious truth, *that as many of us as have been baptized into Jesus Christ*[c], that is, into the profession of the Christian faith; which is the case of us all; *have been baptized into his death*, and engaged to conform to the great purposes of it; which we know were to abolish sin? 4 (1 Pet. iv. 1, 2; 1 John iii. 5.) *Therefore*, as this is the known obligation of this solemn initiatory ordinance, it may be said, that *we are buried with him in* that *baptism*[d] which we received as bringing us *into* a kind of fellowship in [*his*] *death;* most evidently for this purpose, *that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father*, and the operation of his illustrious, though mysterious power; *so we also should* continue, during the remainder of our days, to *walk in newness of life;* maintaining a course of conduct and actions entirely different from the 5 former. *For* surely these two must go together; and we may conclude, that *if we are* thus *made to grow together in the likeness of his death*,[e]

dead to sin, live any longer therein

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall

[b] *Dead to sin.*] Elsner shews how frequently moral writers, among the heathens, speak of wise and good men as dead to sensualities and animal pleasures. Elsner. Observ. Vol. II. p. 28.

[c] *Baptized into Jesus Christ.*] As the church at Rome seems to have been planted about the year 43, and this epistle was written in the year 58, that is, 15 years after, and yet the apostle speaks of the converted Romans in general as baptized, it must be supposed, as Dr. Gale well argues, that baptism was administered to those whose parents had been Christians at the time of their birth. Compare Col. ii. 12. See Gale's Sermons Vol. II. p. 202, 203.

[d] *Buried with him in baptism.*] It seems the part of candour to confess, that here is an allusion to the manner of baptizing by *immersion*, as most usual in these early times; but that will not prove this particular circumstance to be *essential to the ordinance;* and, in whatever manner it was administered, if it were intended as a declaration of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, as it is well known Christ died for sin, it would infer an obligation to die to it, and rise again to a holy life, which is the main point the apostle labours.

[e] *Made to grow together.*] Dr. Wells observes, that this is the most exact import of σύμφυτοι, and that it do not signify merely being *planted together.*—As there is something harsh in the construction of ἀλλὰ καὶ here, Beza would for ἀλλὰ read ἅμα; but Raphelius in his

SECT. XII. Rom. VI. 6.

5 also in the likeness of his resurrection.

so also shall we be united [*in the likeness*] *of* [*his*] *resurrection*, and shall rise up to a life spiritually new, as he rose to immortal life and vigour; *As we know this that our old man*, that is, the whole system of our former inclinations and dispositions, which did by a fatal contagion spread themselves over the whole man, and were incorporated with it, *hath* now, as it were, *been crucified together* [*with Christ*,] the remembrance and consideration of his cross co-operating in the most powerful manner with all the other motives which the gospel suggests, to destroy the former habits of sin, and to inspire us with an aversion to it; *that so the body of sin*, of which this old man did as it were consist, *might be enervated*, deposed and destroyed;[f] *that we might no longer be in bondage to sin*; as we were before we were so happy as to know the gospel and the efficacy of this great doctrine of a crucified Saviour.

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 *For he that is* thus *dead* with Christ *is set at liberty from sin*,[g] sin being crucified to him and he to sin, on the principles mentioned before; just as the death either of the master or the slave, and much more evidently of both, dissolves the relation, and destroys the oppressive power which might before be exercised.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 *And* let me farther remind you, that, as we are Christians, *we believe that if we be* thus *dead with Christ, we shall also live* together *with him*. We expect ere long to share with Christ in the complete holiness and glory of the heavenly

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

notes from Herodotus has produced many parallel constructions in which αλλα signifies, so ... as for the future ... shews that it signifies a necessary consequence from the premises.

[f] *Enervated*, deposed and destroyed. κατ[αργ]ηθη.] We render it *destroyed*, not only tormented or enfeebled, but utterly slain, and so the same word is rendered 2 Thess. ii. 8. and 1 Cor. xv. 26, perhaps not with exact propriety. Heb. ii. 14. The utter destruction of the body of sin in us is certainly intended in the gospel; but the particular import of this word is to make void, *debilitate*, *enervate*, *disannul*, *abolish*, or *depose*. Compare Rom. iii. 31; chap. iv. 14; 1 Cor. xiii. 8; chap. xiii. 3; chap. xv. 24; Eph. ii. 15; 2 Tim. i. 10. I have joined the significations in the paraphrase, and given the version, which appears to me most exactly to answer the import of the original. The body of sin in believers is indeed an enfeebled, conquered, and deposed tyrant, and the stroke of death finishes its destruction.

[g] *Set at liberty.*] Δεδικαιωται signifies to be *justified*, or *vindicated*, and here it seems to import *being delivered from future claims of subjection*. But this sense is so uncommon, that I am much in doubt whether it might not be rendered *justified* here, to intimate that a sense of justification by the cross of Christ is the great means of our delivery from the bondage of sin, as it animates and excites us to shake off its yoke.

SECT. XII.

Rom. VI. 8.

world, and you will easily understand, and I hope easily feel the obligation, which that hope lays upon us, not only to cease from sin, but through his grace to cultivate universal holiness.

9 We should ever be under the influence of these views, even to the very end of our course, *as we know that Christ being raised from the dead, dies no more; death no more reigneth over him,* as it seemed for a while to do. And thus your immortal life and happiness, if you pursue it according to his direction and intention, is secure

10 *For whereas he died, he died once for all,* as a sacrifice *for sin,* to atone the injured justice of God, and repair the honours of his violated law. *And as he liveth, he liveth to God* for ever; his immortal life is entirely appropriated and devoted to his service, wherein we ought to make it our constant care, to imitate his example.

11 Suffer therefore the word of exhortation, grounded on this important principle, and *so do ye also reckon yourselves to be* once for all *dead unto sin,* never to return under its power any more; *and* being thus made *alive,* let it be your care, in imitation of your Divine Master, to devote your recovered life *to* the honour and service of *God in Christ Jesus our Lord,* whose pattern and authority in such a relation, concur to demand it of us.

12 *Therefore let not sin reign* as an uncontroulable sovereign, now you have another Lord, so much greater and better; let not the irregular inclinations of your minds, when they may move *in your mortal bodies,* give law to them. The early conquest of sin over the human nature hath, alas, reduced them to the sad state of mortality; but do not go on, after such a deliverance hath been wrought out for you, in a servile and wretched manner, *to obey it in its licentious desires* and demands.

13 *Neither present your members to sin [as] weapons and instruments of unrighteousness; but* with all devout affection and holy zeal *present yourselves to God as those* who by his rich mercy and almighty power, are now made spiritually *alive,* and called out *from* that wretched state, in which you lay as among *the dead.* Conscious therefore of the obligations you lie under to him, who hath raised you to this new and glorious

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and

SECT. XII.

Rom. VI. 14.

your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

life, present all *your members* and powers *to God*, *as* weapons and *instruments of righteousness*, to fight his battles,[h] and to be for ever devoted to his service. Do it boldly and resolutely, and not as if you feared that your former master should recover his power and prove a severer tyrant, after you had thus attempted to revolt; *for* you may on the contrary be assured that *sin shall not have* any more *dominion over you, as you are not under the law*,[i] a dispensation of bondage and terror, *but under grace*, under the merciful dispensation of the gospel; which affords such consolations, and inspires such hopes, as may animate the soul to a much more successful combat with sin than the law could do, and give a much nobler assurance of a complete victory over it. Romans viii. 1—4.

IMPROVEMENT.

Let our hearts rise with indignation at the thoughts of so ungrateful an abuse of the Divine goodness, as to take encouragement from the aboundings of grace to continue in sin. Are not we likewise by profession dead to it? are not we bound by our baptismal vow, as the ancient Christians to whom Paul addresses himself, were? Or has the use and purpose of baptism been since altered, so as to allow a covenant with sin, an agreement with hell, even to those who are listed under the banners of a Saviour? Is Christ then become the minister of sin, or shall his death lose all its effect, while we profess to honour the solemn memorials of it? Recollecting that we *are not under the law, but under grace*, let so glorious a dispensation animate us to resolutions proportionably heroic; and may the remembrance of the death of the Son of God, in concurrence with that of his resurrection, engage us *to walk in newness of life*, if we desire another day to be *planted into the likeness of* that *resurrection*, and to rise victorious and triumphant from the grave.

Verse 1

2

14

4—5

No more let us return under the power of that spiritual death, from which Christ, at the price of his own life, hath delivered us; but let us live to God; solemnly presenting our bodies and

10, 13

[h] *Instruments to fight his battles.*] The word ὅπλα properly signifies *weapons*, and in this sense it has a beautiful propriety.

[i] *Under the law.*] The Mosaic law may be particularly intended, and the propriety of what is here said, when considered in reference to that, is illustrated by that excellent discourse of the apostle in the viith chapter; but it may very well imply that we are not so under any law, as to be utterly condemned for want of a legal, that is, a perfect righteousness, an apprehension of which would tend utterly to discourage the soul, in all its attempts to free itself for the future from the dominion of sin

SECT. XII.

our souls to him, to be honoured as the instruments of his service, and employing each of our members according to its proper office for his glory. *We are alive from the dead*, we are raised by a Divine power. Let us therefore daily set ourselves as in the presence of the God of our renewed lives, and account that time lost in which we are not acting for him. Without this, in vain do we know the vital truths of his gospel, in vain do we plead for them, and amuse ourselves with a sanguine hope of bearing the image of Christ in glory; if all these powerful arguments cannot now engage us to bear it in holiness.

SECT. XIII.

The Apostle takes this opportunity of urging on the Christians at Rome, that holiness, to which they were so strongly obliged by the gospel. Rom. VI. 15, *to the end.*

ROMANS VI. 15.

SECT. XIII. Rom. VI. 15.

I HAVE just been reminding you, Christians, of your great privileges; that you are now under a dispensation of the most glorious grace in the gospel, and not under the restraints nor under the terrors of the Mosaic law. And *what then* are we to infer? *Shall we* take encouragement from thence to offend him to whose distinguishing goodness we are so much obliged, and *sin* securely and presumptuously, *because we are not under the law, but under* the *grace* of the gospel? *God forbid*. The inference would be so odious, and so dangerous, that though I disclaimed it before, (ver. 1.) I cannot too frequently guard you against it. And should you allow yourselves to argue thus, it would sufficiently prove that you do not belong to Christ; however you may glory in a pretended external relation. *Know ye not that to whomsoever ye present yourselves* [as] *servants*, actually *to obey* his commands, *his servants you are?* Not his whose name ye may bear without practically acknowledging his authority, but his *whom you* in fact *obey*. Least of all can you divide yourselves between two contrary masters, but must *either* be entirely the servants *of sin*, which you know by a certain consequence leads *to eternal death*, *or* entirely the servants of God by a course of resolute and persevering

16

ROMANS VI. 15. WHAT then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obe-

dience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

SECT. XIII.

Rom. VI. 17.

obedience; which, notwithstanding your former failures, will securely lead *to righteousness* and life. *But thanks be to God, that whereas you were* once *the servants of sin,* this is to be spoken of as a bondage past and gone; and that *ye have now obeyed,* not in profession alone, but, *from the heart, the model of doctrine into which ye were delivered,* as into a mold;[a] that your whole temper and life might be formed and fashioned into an amiable and glorious correspondence with it. *And* therefore *being* thus *made* 18 *free from sin, ye are become the servants of righteousness,* and are at once enabled, and obliged to lead a life of true piety and exemplary goodness.

I speak as a man, and upon the common principle of human equity and justice, as well as with a reference to civil customs, with which you, Romans, are so familiarly acquainted. And I reason thus with you, *because of the weakness of your flesh;* because of those infirmities and temptations arising from it; against which I would endeavour to fortify you by every consideration that may render you victorious over it. *As ye have*[b] in time past, while ignorant of the gospel, and many of you the slaves of heathen vice and idolatry *presented your members servants to uncleanness,* and *to* other kinds of *iniquity,* into which that debauchery too naturally leads, *so* let it *now* be your care *to present your members servants of righteousness,* in order *to* the practice of universal *holiness.*

And it is surely fit that this should be your 20 entire employment; *for when ye were servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness,* you never did any single action that was truly good, and on the whole acceptable to God, because none

[a] *Model of doctrine,* &c. τυπον διδαχης. That τυπος may properly be rendered *model,* see note on Rom. v. 14. and add to the instances there given, Elsner's note on this place, and see Dr. Sykes of Christianity, p. 148.—Mr Locke thinks it is an elegant metaphor, to represent the delivery of a servant over from one master to another, and that the gospel, expressed by the form of *sound words,* is the master succeeding to the law. But it seems more probable, that it may allude to *melted metal* being formed by the mold into which it is poured; and it finely expresses the pliancy of temper with respect to the gospel [illegible] so lovely a part of the true Christian's character.

[b] *As ye have,* &c.] It is in the original [illegible]; the [illegible] is here most evidently an expletive, as in Greek it often is. It is of some moment to observe this, and I think it had been better, if our translators had more frequently attended to it.

SECT. XIII. Rom. VI. 20.

was performed from such principles as could intitle it to his complete approbation. Now surely you should be as ready to obey righteousness as you have been to obey sin, and shew as much zeal in the best as you have done in 21 the worst of causes. To engage you *therefore* to this, consider, *what fruit* or advantage *did you then derive from those things, of* the very remembrance of *which you are now* heartily *ashamed;* which you would not be, if you had indeed obtained any solid advantage by them; whereas this is far from being the case, *for the* 22 certain *end of those things* [*is*] *death*. *But* remember, you have *now* what is most honourable and most advantageous in your view; for *being set free from sin, and engaged to God as his servants* and property, *you have your fruit unto holiness*, in which you find a present and most solid advantage; *and the end* you have in view is nothing less than *eternal life:* such is the infinite difference, and so advantageous the 23 exchange you have made. *For* eternal *death* [*is*] *the* proper *wages* and desert *of sin*, and is all the gain which its wretched slave will have to shew from the hand of his tyrannical master in the great day of future account.* *but eternal life* [*is*,] not as in the former instance, the justly deserved retribution of the action, but *the gift of* a gracious and bountiful *God in Christ Jesus our Lord*, to whom we are to ascribe it, that any of our services are accepted, and much more that they are recompensed with a munificence worthy the Lord of all.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 15

BEING set at liberty from the condemning sentence of God's law, let us charge our souls, by all the ties of gratitude, that we do not turn his grace into wantonness; or deceive ourselves with vain words in a matter of infinite importance. We cannot

* Eternal death in the great day of future account.] I see no imaginable reason to believe, as some late writers have intimated in their paraphrase on this verse, that *death* here signifies *being cast out of existence*. See chap. ii. 12. [note]. If this could be inferred with regard to wicked heathens from the places before us, it might also, contrary to the opinion of these authors, be concluded to be the case of wicked Christians, from chap. viii. 13. The truth is, that *to die* signifies to fall under the capital sentence of the Divine law; and it is well known, that being cast into the everlasting fire is in this view called death, Rev. xxi. 8.

SECT. XIII.

be at the same time the *servants of God* and *the servants of sin;* and certainly our understandings must be darkened to infatuation, if we can long doubt whose service we should prefer. *The work of righteousness is peace,* the *effect of it quietness and assurance for ever,* (Isa. xxxii. 17;) but *death is the wages of sin,* and it shall be repaid to all that go on in it. And O what, and how terrible a death! *to be cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* How merciful are all the repeated admonitions which warn us to flee from it! Let us all judge, that it is already too long that we *have yielded ourselves the servants of sin:* too long that our members, made for the service of their Creator, devoted perhaps with great solemnity to our Redeemer, have been abused and prostituted as the instruments of unrighteousness. Surely it is too much time that we have already spent, too much vigour that we have already exerted in so base a servitude. For the future let us act as those who are made free from sin.

Verse 17 - 23

18, 19

22

And to animate us to it, let us often reflect how unfruitful the works of darkness have been found; in what shame they have already ended; in what shame and everlasting contempt they must end, if they be finally pursued. And let us daily direct our eye to that everlasting life, that crowns the happy prospect of those who *have their fruit unto holiness.* Blessed effect of serving God now, to serve and enjoy him for ever! to enjoy, through eternal ages, the pleasures of a nature thoroughly sanctified, and the sight and favour of that God, who is the original source and pattern of sanctification! It is the glorious mark at which we are aiming. Let us pursue it steadily and resolutely; yet always remembering that it is the gift of God, and never presuming to think of so glorious a remuneration as the wages of any duty we can perform. Alas! the imperfections of our best services daily forfeit the blessings of time: how impossible then is it, that the sincerity of them, amidst so many frailties and defects, should purchase the glories of eternity!

21

22

23

SECT. XIV.

The Apostle enters upon his design of taking off the believing Jews from their fond attachment to the Mosaic law, now they were, in a spiritual sense, married to Christ by the gospel. Rom. VII. 1—6.

ROMANS VII. 1.

KNOW ye not, bre-

ROMANS VII. 1.

I HAVE been endeavouring to direct your regards to the gospel, and to Christ as there exhibited, in order to your justification and salvation. Now you may perhaps be ready to ob-

SECT. XIV.

Rom. VII. 1

ject, that you, who are Jews, will certainly be out of the way of obtaining those privileges, if you should neglect the Mosaic law, the Divine authority of which none can reasonably question. *But know ye not, brethren, (for I am* now *speaking to those that are* supposed to be familiarly *acquainted with the* contents of that *law* for which they are so zealous;) *that*, on the principles which *the law* itself lays down, it *ruleth over a man* only *so long as it liveth:*[a] its dominion over particular persons can, at the utmost, last no longer than till it is itself abrogated; for that is as it were its death, since the Divine authority going along with it was the very life and soul of the law. Suppose that to cease, and the letter of the precept is but a dead corpse, and with respect to its obligation as if 2 it had never been. Just as it is, according to the law itself, with respect to the power of an husband over his wife, which death entirely dissolves: *for the married woman is* indeed *bound* and confined *by the law to her husband while he is alive; but if [her] husband be dead, she is set at liberty from* any farther subjection to *the law of [her] husband*, that is, from that law which had given him a peculiar property in 3 her, and authority over her. *Therefore if she become the property of another* man,[b] *whilst her husband liveth, she carries the* infamous *name of an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is set at liberty from the* obligation of the *law*

thren (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

2 For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband.

3 So then, if while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that

[a] *So long as it liveth:* ἐφ' ὅσον χρονον ζῃ.] It would be contrary to the apostle's design, to suppose the sense of this to be, as our translation renders it, *as long as he*, that is, the man in question *liveth:* for he professedly endeavours to prove that they had out-lived their obligations to the *law*. Elsner would connect ανθρωπȣ with νομος, and render it, *the law* and *authority of the husband continues in force, as long as he*, that is, *the husband liveth*, and produces authorities to prove that κυριευω is often applied to the *obliging force of a law*, or that *matrimonial customs* are sometimes called *laws*. (Observ. Vol. II. p. 31.) But this, if it avoid as he pleads, one tautology, certainly occasions another, for the 2d verse plainly expresses this sense; and it would require a transposition not to be allowed without more apparent reason. Our rendering is more natural, and suits the connection with the following verses, in which the law is represented as the first husband whose decease leaves them free to be married to Christ.

[b] *If she become the property of another*, (εαν γενηται ανδρι ἑτερῳ) *while her husband liveth*, &c.] The apostle here speaks in the general, not entering exactly into every excepted case that might be imagined, to infer therefore, contrary to our Lord's express decision elsewhere, that adultery is not a sufficient foundation for divorce, seems very unreasonable; though Bishop Burnet assures us that great stress was once laid on the argument. Burn. Hist. of the Reformation, Vol. II. p. 57.

law: so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

that bound her to him, *so as to be no more* subject to the shame and punishment of *an adulteress; though she become the property of another* man: for death having interposed between them, hath dissolved the former relation; he is dead to her and she to him. *Thus ye also, my* dear *brethren, are* in effect *dead to the* Mosaic *law by the body of Christ;*[c] his death and sufferings having now accomplished its design, and abrogated its authority: and this, with a gracious intent, *that ye might be,* as it were, *married to another,* [*that is,*] *to him who was* in so glorious and triumphant a manner *raised from the dead,* no more to die; *that* in consequence of this new marriage, *we might bring forth fruit unto God* in all the ways of holy obedience.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him, who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

And ye should do it with the greatest zeal; *for when we were in the flesh,* that is, under the comparatively carnal dispensation of Moses, a variety of *sinful passions,* accidentally occasioned and irritated *by the law, were active in our members, so as* to produce visible sinful actions, and in them *to bring forth* a very different *fruit* from that which I have just been mentioning; even as I observed before, (chap. vi. 21, 23,) such fruit as would expose you *to* eternal *death,* if God were to be strict to mark your offences, and if his mercy did not interpose to break the fatal connection: a circumstance which it is of the utmost importance seriously to reflect upon.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death:

But now we are set at liberty from our obligation to *the law,* that obligation *in which we were held, being* in effect *dead,* or abrogated (as I told you above, ver. 1—4,) *so as* that now you are, in a more liberal manner, and from nobler principles, *to serve* God as your Master and Father in Christ, *in the newness of the Spirit, and not* [*in*] *the oldness of the letter:*[d] that is, you are to live as those that are renewed by the Holy Spirit of God, in a rich abundance poured out upon you under this new and better dispensation, whereby

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

[c] *By the body of Christ.*] He is to be considered here as testifying by the authority of a Christian apostle, that this was the design of Christ's death; so that all he does in his argument here, is to shew, that allowing it to have been thus, (as Jewish believers all did,) their freedom from the Mosaic law followed on the very principles of that law itself.

[d] *Newness of the Spirit, not* [*in*] *the oldness of the letter.*] This is the literal version, but *new spirit, and old letter,* are tantamount expressions, and are more agreeable to the turn of our language.

SECT. XIV. you are brought to observe the spiritual meaning and design of the law; being no longer bound by these literal and ceremonial precepts which were indeed obligatory long since, but now begin to be antiquated, and out of date. (Heb. viii. 13.)

IMPROVEMENT.

GOD hath conferred upon all Christians this singular honour, that the whole body of them should be represented as *espoused to Christ.* Let us always remember how we are engaged by that sacred relation, *to bring forth fruit unto God.* And may the remembrance of the resurrection of Christ put continual vigour into our obedience, while we regard him as the ever-living Lord, to whom our obligations are indissoluble and everlasting.

Too much have *sinful passions* reigned in our flesh, during our unconverted state. In too many instances have they *wrought* effectually *to bring forth fruit unto death.* And we owe it to the wonderful mercy and forbearance of God, that death, eternal death, hath not long since been the consequence.

Being freed from the yoke of the ceremonial law, being freed also from the condemning sentence of that moral law, under the by tional nature we are all born; let us thankfully acknowledge the favour, and charge it upon our grateful hearts, that we serve God in newness of spirit and of life. To engage us to this, may we experience more abundantly the renewings of the Holy Ghost; and the actions of our lives will be easily and delightfully reduced to the obedience of these precepts which his omnipotent and gracious hand hath inscribed on our hearts!

SECT. XV.

To wean the believing Jews from their undue attachment to the law of Moses, the apostle represents at large, how comparatively ineffectual its motives were, to produce that holiness, which by a lively faith in the gospel, we may so happily obtain. Rom. VII. 7, *to the end.* VIII. 1—4.

ROMANS VII. 7.

SECT. XV. Rom. VII. 7. I HAVE been observing above, to those of my Christian brethren who were educated in the Jewish religion, that irregular passions, while we were under the law of Moses, and were acquainted with no superior dispensation, did in some instances, by means of the law, operate so as to bring forth fruit unto death. And it is necessary, that I should not only farther illustrate

ROMANS VII. 7.

WHAT shall we say

hen? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

that important remark, but expressly caution against any mistake with relation to it. *What shall we say then*, or what do we intend by that assertion! [*that*] *the law* itself [*is*] *sin*, that there is any moral evil in it, or that it is intended by God, or adapted in its own nature, to lead men into sin? *God forbid!* We revere the high authority by which it was given, too humbly, to insinuate any thing of that kind. And *indeed* there are many particulars in which *I should not have known sin, but by the law*[a]. I should not, in a mere state of nature, have apprehended the evil of them: which I now learn from finding them so expressly prohibited. *I had not* for instance *known* the sinfulness of *lust*, or irregular desires, *unless the law had said*, "*Thou shalt not covet*;[b]" from whence it was easy to infer, that this law takes cognizance of the heart as well as of external actions. *But* as soon as I had understanding enough to perceive that the law forbade the indulgence of irregular desires, I found that I had in fact broken it; and thereby incurred the penalty, without any hope of help and deliverance from the law. And this, while I looked no farther, naturally tended to throw my mind into a state of dejection and despair. So that I may say, that *sin taking occasion from the* awful sanction of the *commandment*[c], the wrath and ruin which it denounced, brought me into so sad a situation of mind, and left me so little strength and spirit to resist

8 But sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought

[a] *I should not have known sin*, &c.] The apostle here, by a very dexterous turn, changes the person, and speaks as of himself. This he elsewhere does, (Rom. iii. 6; 1 Cor. x. 30, chap. iv. 6.) when he is only personating another character. And the character assumed here is that of a man, first *ignorant of the law*, then *under it*, and sincerely desiring to please God, but finding to his sorrow, the weakness of the motives it suggested, and the sad discouragement under which it left him; and last of all, *with transport discovering the gospel*, and gaining pardon and strength, peace and joy by it. But to suppose he speaks all these things of himself, as the confirmed Christian, that he really was, when he wrote this epistle, is not only foreign, but contrary to the whole scope of his discourse, as well as to what is expressly asserted, chap. viii. 2.

[b] *Thou shalt not covet.*] This, by the way, proves, that Paul thought the covetousness forbidden in the tenth commandment related to the *heart*, and not merely, as some have represented it, to any *overt act*, to an attempt to take away what belongs to another. And this might be a hint to all thinking men, that the secret powers of their souls were under a Divine inspection, and that much guilt might be contracted which did not appear to any human eye.

[c] *Sin taking occasion from the commandment.*] Most commentators have explained this, as signifying, that sin was quickened by the prohibition; the inclination of human nature in general being like that

SECT. XV.

Rom. VII. 8

future temptation, when I seemed already undone; that it might in a manner be said to have *wrought powerfully in me all manner of concupiscence*[d]; such advantage did sin gain against me. And I mention this, as the effect of my becoming acquainted with the law, *because* while I was ignorant of the sentence, and considered myself as *without the law* of God, *sin* [*was*] *dead;* I was no more aware of any danger from it, or any power it had to hurt me, than if it 9 had been a dead enemy. *For I once was,* as it were, *alive without the law*[e], considering myself as a man acquainted with it, I may say I was comparatively cheerful and happy: *but when the commandment came,* and I became acquainted with it, in its wide extent, unspotted purity and awful sanctions, then *sin,* immediately *came to life again;* it sprung up against me as a living enemy, armed with instruments of destruction; *and I,* as incapable of resisting it, fell down, and *died;* finding myself unable to resist my 10 miserable doom. *And* thus *the commandment which* [*was*] in its original constitution [*intended*] *for life*[f], and calculated so to regulate men's temper and conduct, as if perfectly obeyed, to give them a legal claim to life and happiness, was quite changed in this respect. For *I* having thus broken it, and by such breach brought its condemning

in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment which *was* *ordained* to life, I

of a froward child, who will do a thing because it was forbidden, and perhaps is, as it were, reminded of an evil, on hearing it mentioned in a prohibition. But, not to examine how far this is a universal case, it must surely be acknowledged, that all lust does not arise from hence, much being previous to any possible knowledge of God's law, whether revealed or natural. I therefore incline to the interpretation which Mr. Dunlop has given, in his excellent Sermon on this passage, the tenor of whose thoughts I have followed in the whole of my paraphrase upon it, begging leave to refer my reader to his discourse, for the reasons that have determined me to it. Compare Jer. ii. 25. See Dunl. Serm Vol. II. p. 46, 47.

[d] *Wrought for me.*] The word κατεργάζομαι in many places signifies *to operate in a powerful and efficacious manner,* (compare 2 Cor. iv. 17; chap. v. 5; chap. vii. 11; chap. xii. 12,) and may well here signify a *strong irritation* of what might, without it, have been in some degree natural,

[e] *I was once alive without the law.*] The apostle cannot, as Mr. Locke supposes here, speak in the person of the whole Jewish people, and in this clause refer to the time between Abraham and Moses; for, not to examine how far this description would suit them then, we must on that principle of interpretation suppose, they are all represented in the close of the chapter, *as believing in Christ;* which alas! we know to have been very far from being their case.

[f] *Intended for life.*] The law may be said to have been *intended for life,* though by sin made the occasion of death; as medicines, which not being rightly applied, prove fatal, may nevertheless be said to have been *intended for cure.*

found to be unto death.

sentence upon me, really *found* it [*to be*] *unto death.* I found it attended with deadly consequences, both as it consigned me over to destruction for past sin, and occasionally, though not intentionally, proved productive of new guilt and misery. *For sin*, as I before said, taking occasion by the terror and curse of the violated *commandment*, and representing the great Law-giver as now become my irreconcileable enemy, *deceived me* into a persuasion that I could be no worse than I was, *and thereby it slew me;* it multiplied my mortal wounds, and rendered my case still more desperate.

11 For sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

12 Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

12 *So that* you see, upon the whole, *the law* in the general [*is*] acknowledged to be *holy, and the* particular *commandment* in question is acknowledged to be agreeable to the *holy* nature of God, *just* in reference to the reason of things, *and* on the whole, in its consequences *good*, and subservient to men's happiness, if they continue in a state of rectitude. 13 *Was then that which was good* in itself *made death to me?* Shall I charge my ruin on this holy and good law of God? By no means. *God forbid* I should ever utter any thing like that. *But* I must rather charge it upon *sin*, which by means of so holy an instrument undid me. I say it again, Sin was made death to me, *so that it appeared to be sin* indeed,[g] (that odious dreadful thing, of which nothing can be said worse than it is itself,) as *working death in me, by* the occasion of *that which is* so eminently *good: that* so *sin might by the commandment* thus perverted, *appear exceeding sinful*, and stand forth in all its native and detestable colours; capable of turning the law itself into a means of producing the guilt it so solemnly forbade, and the ruin it was intended to prevent.

13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, worketh death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

14 For we know that the law is spiri-

14 It is on this therefore that I lay all the blame; *for we* well *know that the law is spiritual*, and as it extends to the Spirit, was intended to purify and exalt it, and to assert its superiority over the meaner part of our nature. *But*, alas,

g *So that it appeared;* ἵνα φανῇ.] Elsner contends that φανῇ is an expletive here; but I choose not to allow any word in scripture to be an expletive, that may fairly and naturally be expounded into any significant sense; as it is plain this may here be. See Elsner Observ. Vol. II p. 37.

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may the man I have been describing and representing above, be ready to say, *I am* in a great measure *carnal*, *and* in so many instances subdued by the remaining infirmities of my nature, that I am ready passionately to cry out, I am even *sold under sin*;[h] which often rises with an almost irresistible strength, to assume a tyrannical dominion over me, as if I were its slave and 15 property. *For that which I* actually *do*, *I* allow, or *approve not*[i] in many instances; *for* too often, through the strength of passion and surprise of temptation, *I practise not that which* in the general tenor of my mind *I* habitually *will*; *but the things which I* even *hate*, which I think of with the greatest abhorrence, *those things* in many respects *I* am so unhappy to *do*: which 16 indeed makes me a burden to myself. *Now if I do that which I would not*, in willing not to do it, *I* do so far, though to my own condemnation, *consent to the law*, and bear my testimony to it, *that* [*it is*] *good*, and do indeed desire to fulfil it; though when a pressing hour of temptation comes, contrary to my resolution, I fail in ob-17 serving it. *But now*, in these circumstances, *it is no more I myself that* can properly be said to *do it*; *but* rather *sin*, *which dwelleth in me*, and which makes, as it were, another person, having desires and motions and interests entirely contrary to these of the renewed part 18 within: which I would call my better self. *For I* well *know*, *that in me*, *that is*, *in my flesh*, the corrupt and degenerate self, *nothing that is good dwelleth*. I find my animal powers sadly debased and enslaved: *for to will is indeed present with me*, I form many good purposes and

tual: but I am carnal, sold under sin

15 For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that *it is* good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know, that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with

[h] *Sold under sin.*] This is often urged as an argument, that the apostle here speaks in the person of a wicked man, and is represented as a phrase parallel to 1 Kings xxi. 20; 2 Kings xvii. 17; where some of the worst of men are described as having *sold themselves to do evil*. But the diversity of the expression is very obvious; and yet had this person been represented as lamenting that *he had sold himself to sin*, it might have been understood as the language of penitent remorse for past guilt, and so very consistent with a good man's character. And the many instances in which very excellent persons in the distress of their hearts for the remainder of imperfection in their character, adopt this very phrase, plainly shew with what propriety Paul might put it into the mouth of one whom he did not consider as an abandoned sinner, and destitute of every principle of real piety.

[i] *I approve not.*] Gataker (de Styl. Nov. Testam. cap. 4; Advers Miscell. lib. 1. cap. 6.) and Raphelius in loc. bring apposite instances of such a use of the word γινωσκω

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me; but *how* to perform that which is good, I find not.

resolutions; *but* when the time comes in which I should bring them into effect, *I find not* in my heart a sufficient [*ability*] strenuously *to perform that which* I know *is good*, and which I acknowledge to be most amiable and desirable.

19 For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.

19 It is indeed so grievous a reflection to me, that I cannot forbear repeating it again and again; *for* it is really so, that *I do not the good* that *I* often *will*, and resolve to do; *but the evil which I will not* to do, which I form the strongest purposes against, *that I do*[k] in repeated instances.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

20 *If therefore*, as I said before, *I do that which I would not*, and am, as it were, overpowered in some cases and circumstances, contrary to the settled and prevailing bent and inclination of my soul, *it is no more I that do it, but sin, which*, as another person, *dwelleth in me*[l], and, like an evil demon, when it has taken possession of a man, uses my faculties and powers, over which it usurps an abhorred dominion, to carry on its own contrary and destructive interests.

21 I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man:

23 But I see ano-

21 *I find then*, upon the whole *a* sort of constraining *law*, which so influences me, *that when I would do good, evil is* in fact *present with me*. 22 *For with regard to the inner-man*, that is, my mind, the better and nobler powers of my intellectual nature, *I delight in the law of God*[m], I most heartily approve it, and look upon its whole system with complacency, as what I could rejoice to be conformed to in the completest manner, and highest degree. 23 *But*, alas, *I see*

[k] *The evil which I will not, that I do.*] If the meaning of such expressions as these were, that upon the whole, the person using them went on in a prevailing course of habitual wickedness, against the convictions and dictates of his own conscience, one would imagine Paul would have rebuked such a one with great severity, and answered these vain and hypocritical pleas; whereas he represents this person afterwards, as with joy embracing the gospel, and so obtaining superior strength upon the full manifestation of pardoning grace there.

[l] *Sin that dwelleth, &c.*] This seems indeed no more than a repetition of verse 17; but it is a graceful and expressive repetition, and shews how near the affair lay to the heart of the person thus complaining, and in what sad and frequent successions the complaint was renewed. The beautiful passage in the 6th book of Xenophon's Cyropædia, (p. 328, edit. Hutchin. 1738. 8vo.) where Araspus complains of two souls contending within him, (a passage which it is very possible St. Paul might have read,) contains an agreeable illustration of this paragraph.

[m] *I delight in the law of God after the inner-man.*] This is so sure a trace of real piety, and is represented in scripture as, in this view, so decisive; that if it be supposed a true representation of the character, we must surely allow it to have been that of a truly good man; whatever lamented imperfections might attend it. —Plato uses the phrase ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος for the *rational part of our nature*.

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Rom. VII. 23.

another and quite opposite *law*, of vicious and irregular inclinations, seated *in my members*, which, taking its rise from a lower and meaner principle, is continually *making war against the* better *law of my mind, and* too frequently *captivating me to the law of sin, which is*, as I said, 24 seated *in my* corporeal *members*. *Wretched man that I am!* Do I often cry out in such a circumstance, with no better supports and incitements than the law can give; *who shall rescue me*, miserable captive as I am, *from the body of this death?* From this continual burden which I carry about with me, and which is cumbersome and odious, as a dead carcase, tied to a living body, to be dragged along with it wherever it goes[n].

> their law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.
>
> 24 O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 Thus I bemoan myself, when I think only of the Mosaic law, the discoveries it makes, the motives it suggests, and the circumstances in which it leaves the offender: but in the midst of this gloomy prospect, a sight of the gospel revives my heart; and I cry out as in a kind of rapture, as soon as I turn mine eyes to it, *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*[o], in whom he now reveals himself to me, and by whom he delivereth me from this bondage and misery. *So then, whereas I myself*[p], *with* the nobler powers of *my spirit serve the law of God, though* in too many instances I am so oppressed *with* the infirmity of *my flesh*, that I am subdued by

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the law of sin: [*There is*] *now*, under the gospel dispensation, *no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*[q]; that is, to those, who making a

> 25 I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin.
>
> ROMANS VIII. 1. *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

[n] Dead carcase, &c.] It is well known, that some ancient writers mention this as a cruelty practised by some tyrants on miserable captives who fell into their hands; and a more forcible and expressive image of the sad case represented, cannot surely enter into the mind of man.

[o] *I thank God through Jesus Christ.*] For ευχαριστω τω Θεω, some copies read η χαρις τα Θεα, *the grace of God*, which to be sure makes a noble sense; but that of the received, and much more authentic copies comes very near it, and in the main coincides with it.

[p] *Whereas I myself, &c.—there is now no condemnation, &c.*] I think, there is not in the whole New Testament a more unhappy division between two chapters than what has been made here, not only in the midst of an argument, but even of a sentence. Αρα ουν, and αρα νυν, answer so evidently to each other, that I think it plain, the former should be rendered, *whereas*, and then the sense appears plain and strong. I must confess this to be an uncommon use of αρα; but if it be, as it often is, an expletive, it will come to much the same.

[q] *To those in Christ Jesus, who walk, &c.*] It is certain, that to be in Christ, though it sometimes imports a true and sanctifying faith, (2 Cor. v. 17,) at other times expresses only an external profession,

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profession of the Christian faith, do in the main course of their lives verify that profession; governing themselves by spiritual views, and maxims, and not by carnal appetites and interests. I say it again, I thank God for this dispensation with all the powers of my soul; *for* though, when considering myself as only under the law, I made such melancholy complaints, *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, that glorious gospel which is attended with an abundant effusion of the vivifying and animating Spirit, *has* now recovered me, mortally wounded as I seemed to have been, and *set me at liberty from* that lamented captivity to *the law of sin and death.*[r] *For God hath* now, by a gracious and most wonderful appearance [*done*] *what it was impossible for the law to do, in that it was* comparatively *weak through* the great infirmity of *the flesh,*[s] against which in so corrupt a state it could not, merely by its own principles, sufficiently provide:[t] [*he,*] I say, the great Father of mercies, *by sending his own* well-beloved *Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh,*[u]

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful

(John xv. 2.) and as the article τοῖς is not repeated, I think it is plain the latter clause limits the former, which justifies our rendering. Compare Psal. lxxiii. 1.

[r] *Hath set me at liberty,* &c.] It is to be observed, that the same person who spoke before is here represented as continuing the discourse, and speaks of himself as delivered from the bondage so bitterly complained of.

[s] *What it was impossible for the law to do,* &c.] It is indeed true in the general, as the pious professor Zimmerman justly observes, (in his excellent Comment. de Emin. Cognit. Christi, p. 6, 7, and 34.) "that the strength of the *law* is not adequate to that of corrupt nature; and "it is by *evangelical* considerations, that "we are most effectually animated to "subdue sin." But that is to be considered as a consequence of what the apostle here asserts concerning the law of Moses, rather then the assertion itself. And indeed whoever considers the awful nature and sanctions of that law, must acknowledge, that it was calculated to be a much more efficacious restraint from sin than the unassisted light of nature, or than any other dispensation revealing God's law, prior to the gospel. So that the above-mentioned consequence is very strong.

[t] Merely by its own principles, sufficiently provide.] By this clause I endeavour to lay in an effectual answer to that objection which might lie against the apostle's argument, and our explication of it, from the eminent heights of goodness, attained by some holy men under the law. It was not by the law, though under it, that they obtained them; but by those evangelical promises which mingled with the law, though they did not make a part of it, but sprang from the Abrahamic covenant, which, as the apostle elsewhere urges, was unrepealed by the law; and this, which the Jews were so ready to forget, (Rom. x. 3.) is the point that he so particularly labours, both in this epistle, and that to the Galatians, to inculcate.

[u] *The likeness of sinful flesh.*] Those writers who imagine that our first parents were, in their original state clothed with a visible lustre, which was lost by their transgression, in reference to which it is said, *that they knew they were naked,* naturally explain this clause by that hypothesis.

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Rom. VIII. 3.

with all those innocent infirmities which the first apostasy of our nature brought upon human flesh, *and* by appointing him *to be a sacrifice* to make expiation *for sin*, [x] *who hath condemned sin in the flesh.* Instead of being victorious, it is now brought under a sentence of death and destruction, which we, animated by these glorious motives of the gospel, are en-4 abled to put into execution: *That the righteousness of the law*, in all its fundamental branches, *may* with greater ardour of holy zeal *be fulfilled in us*, *who* answer the engagements of our Christian profession, and, in the tenor of our lives, *walk not after the flesh* to indulge its desires and demands, *but after the Spirit*; that is, who under the influences of the Spirit of God abound in the sentiments and duties of a truly spiritual life. You see therefore, my dear brethren, by the whole series of this discourse, not only how safely you may cease the observation of the Mosaic law, but how absolutely necessary it is, that you should look beyond that, and consequently beyond any other law, natural or revealed; as ever you expect justification before God, and desire to be animated to serve him in an acceptable manner.

flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh;

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

IMPROVEMENT.

ADMIRABLE and adorable indeed were the condescensions of the blessed God, *in sending his own Son in the likeness of* our *sinful flesh*, stript of its original glories, *that he might become* an expiatory *Sacrifice for sin.* Let us remember the grand purpose for which he did it; that he might condemn sin in our flesh, that he might enable us to do execution on sin as a condemned malefactor. In his name therefore let us pursue the victory, and rejecting every overture of accommodation, with determined zeal do justice upon it. And may what we have been reading, establish our resolution of walking, *not after the flesh*, *but after the Spirit*, since we are now delivered from the curse of a broken law, and blessed with a dispensation so properly called *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*: a dispensation, by attending to the peculiarities of which, we may be enabled to extend our conquests

(Verse 3, 1, 2)

[x] *For sin.*] That ἁμαρτία signifies *a sacrifice for sin*, is very apparent, from Heb. x. 6; 2 Cor. v. ult. and a vast many other passages. The reader will observe, how very easy this little transposition, on account of what is so plainly a parenthesis, makes this passage, which is generally thought so obscure.

over sin in the most effectual manner, and to attain heights of virtue and piety to which no legal considerations and motives alone could raise us.

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But O, what reason of humiliation is there, that we improve it no better, and that these melancholy strains should so well become us! That instead of pressing forward daily to fresh victories, and making new improvements in the Divine life, we should so often complain, and have so much cause to complain, of *a law in our members*, not only *warring against the law of our minds*, but even in many instances, *bringing us into captivity to the law of sin and death*: so that we Christians should cry out, like those under the Mosaic œconomy, *O wretched men, that we are, who shall deliver us!* Let renewed views of Christ Jesus animate us to renewed vigour in this warfare; lest when we are delivered from those servile terrors which the legal dispensation under a consciousness of guilt might have awakened, sin, no longer able to take this occasion from the law, should appear yet more exceeding sinful, by taking occasion, in another view, even from the gospel itself; which in many instances it seems to do.

Verse 23, 24

25

8, 11

13

Let us remember, that the *law* of God, *is holy, just, and good*: delighting *in it* more and more *after our inner-man*, and taking heed, that we do not deceive ourselves by such a passage as this, into a secret, but vain and fatal hope, that because we are convinced of our duty, and feel in our conscience a sense of the evil of sin, we might be said to serve the law of God, while by abandoning ourselves to known acts of wilful transgression, we are in our flesh serving the law of sin. Habitually to allow ourselves in neglecting the good we approve, and committing the evils we condemn, is the readiest way that hell itself can point out for the ruin of immortal souls; in such a case, all that we know, and all that we feel, concerning the obligations of duty, and the excellence of holiness, aggravate, rather than extenuate, our failures; and though the sublime views which eminently good men under the gospel have of religion, may sometimes incline them to adopt such complaints as these, in reference to the unallowed and lamented deficiencies and infirmities of a truly upright and pious life; it remains an eternal truth, which instead of being abrogated under the New Testament, is most expressly confirmed, that *he who doth righteousness is righteous*, and not he that merely wishes to do it; and *he who committeth sin is of the devil*, even though he should speak against it like an apostle, or an angel.

12

22

It is indeed impossible, exactly to lay the line that separates the boundaries of the kingdom of Christ and of Satan; nor is it by any means a desirable thing, that we should know the lowest state of weakness and degeneracy into which a Christian may fall, while he continues in the main a Christian. We have great reason to doubt whether we be really Christians ourselves, if for

21, 24

SECT. XV.

our own sakes we wish to know it. Our calling obliges us to aspire after the most eminent attainments in religion; it obliges us never to rest till we find ourselves *dead indeed unto sin, and alive to God through Jesus Christ*; so as to abound in all the vital fruits of righteousness unto his praise and glory.

SECT. XVI.

The obligations which the gospel lays upon us to a holy life are further urged, and especially those arising from the communication of the Spirit of God to believers. Rom. VIII. 5—17.

ROMANS VIII. 5.

SECT. XVI. Rom. VIII. 5.

I HAVE, in the preceding discourse, urged it again and again, that we who profess ourselves Christians should walk, not after the flesh but after the Spirit, as ever we desire to rejoice in the glorious deliverance which the gospel brings; and with the greatest reason: for this is indeed the most important distinction in the character of men, and not any form of outward profession, or rite of worship and devotion. *They who are after the flesh*, that is, who remain under the influence of a corrupt and degenerate nature, *do mind the things of the flesh;* they prefer and pursue carnal and animal gratifications: *but they who are after the Spirit*, that is, who know any thing experimentally of that Spirit of life which I mentioned above, (ver. 2,) [*do mind*,] and pursue *the things of the Spirit:* their minds are formed to a superior relish of spiritual, intellectual, and sacred pleasures, suited to that nobler and immortal part of their na-

6 ture. *Now* as the character of these persons is so widely different, their end will be proportionably so; for *the minding of the flesh*,[a] the preferring and pursuing its interests [*is*] *death;* it is the greatest misery that can be imagined, and that which leads to everlasting death and ruin? *whereas the minding*, preferring, and pursuing the interests of *the Spirit* [*is*] *life, and peace;* the greatest present good and happiness which

7 leads to life and glory everlasting. And it must

ROMANS VIII. 5. FOR they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded, is life and peace:

7 Because the car

[a] *Now the minding*, &c.] It is plain, δε must here signify *now*, for nothing could be more absurd, than to say, that some *minded* the things of the flesh, *because* it is death to do it.

nal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

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Rom. VIII. 7.

needs be so, *because the carnal mind*, as I have described it above, [*is*] in the very essence of it an absolute *enmity to* the blessed *God*: from whom all life and peace and happiness proceed; and consequently it brings us into a state of hostility against him. *For* it is impossible his creatures should be in a state of friendship with him, unless they are in a state of willing subjection to him. Now, as for the carnal mind, *it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it* possibly *be* [*so.*] For however you may suppose any law of God to vary, as to ritual and ceremonial institutions, while the nature of God continues pure and holy, as it must eternally and immutably do; he cannot but require the observation of the grand branches of moral virtue, founded on the unalterable nature and relation of things; he therefore must require us to be spiritually minded, and to prefer the interest of the soul to that of the body. *So that they who* are *in the flesh*, that is under the government of a fleshly principle, whatever ceremonial precepts they may observe, or whatever orthodox principles of faith they may profess and maintain, yet *cannot* possibly *please God*. He must either abhor and punish them, or dishonour his own law, and contradict his pure, holy, and unchangeable nature. *But* blessed be God, *you* Christians *are not in the flesh*, in that carnal enslaved state described above, *but in the Spirit*, and under his influence; ye, my brethren, are certainly so, *if* that *the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*; for wherever he dwells, he reigns, and makes the soul thoroughly holy. *And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ* thus residing and governing in him, then, whatever he may pretend, *he is none of his*: he is not to be reckoned as a disciple of Christ, and Christ will disown him another day, as having only abused his name, while he wore it.

8 So then they that are in the flesh, cannot please God.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

10 And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of

And by the way, to animate your hopes and all your graces, remember, that *if Christ* [*be*] thus resident *in you*, by his sanctifying Spirit, though *the body* [*is*] *indeed dead because of* the first *sin*, that ever entered into the world,[b]

[b] *The body is dead because of sin, &c.*] Some would render it, *with respect to sin*; but as there is no seeming opposition between a death with respect to sin, and a

SECT. XVI.

Rom. VIII. 10.

which as I shewed above, has brought on a sentence of universal death; *yet the spirit* [*is*] *life*, and shall after death continue living, active, and happy, *because of* that *righteousness* of which our great Head, the second Adam, is the Author, as I have inculcated at large.

11 *And* we have this farther joyful hope, that *if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus*, our great Covenant-Head, *from the dead, dwell in you, he that* so powerfully and gloriously *raised up Christ from the dead, will also* in due time, *quicken your mortal bodies*, though corrupted and consumed in the grave, *by* the agency of *that* great and powerful *Spirit, which*, now *dwelleth in you*, and acts to quicken you in the Divine life.

12 *Therefore*, my dear brethren, since it is certain the gratifications of the flesh can do nothing for us like that which will be done for us at the resurrection, and since all present enjoyments are mean and worthless when compared with that; here is a most substantial argument for that mortification and sanctity which the gospel requires. And it necessarily follows, that *we are debtors* to the Spirit, which gives us such exalted hopes, and *not unto the flesh, that we should live after* the dictates, desires, and appetites of *the flesh*.

13 *For* I must plainly and faithfully tell you, and must repeat and inculcate it upon you, as a matter of infinite importance, that *if you*, though professing Christians, and some of you eminent for so high and distinguishing a profession, (Compare chap. i. 8,) do *live after the flesh*, and mind nothing superior to its interests, *ye shall* assuredly *die*, that is, shall perish by the sentence of an holy God, no less than if you were Jews or heathens. *But if you, through the* influence and assistance of God's holy *Spirit*, and the exercise of those graces which he by regeneration has implanted in your souls, *do mortify* and subdue *the deeds of the body*, those carnal inclinations from whence all criminal indulgencies of the body arise, *ye shall live*: ye shall finally obtain a state of complete felicity, in spite

sin, but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you: he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

life with respect to righteousness, I think the version here retained much preferable, and if this be admitted, it will certainly determine the sense of the next verse quite contrary to Mr. Locke's unnatural gloss, which explains, *quickening the mortal body*, by *sanctifying the immortal spirit*.

SECT XVI

Rom VIII 13

of all that death can do to dissolve these animal bodies: not now to insist on that true rational delight which is only to be found here in such a course, and without which our abode on earth scarce deserves the name of life. Well may it be expected, that in this case you shall live for ever; since hereby your adoption of God, which must entitle you to a blissful immortality, will be approved. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God*, and humbly resign themselves to be guided whithersoever he will, by his sweet and secret influence on the soul, *they are* indeed *the sons* and daughters *of God*, and shall inherit eternal life with their heavenly Father: of which, indeed, if we are obedient to his holy dictates and motions, we already receive the earnest and foretastes. *For ye*, who are real Christians, *have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear*,[c] ye are not come under another dispensation like that of Moses, which was much more adapted to strike the mind with terror, and often produces a servile disposition: *but* on the contrary, *ye have received the spirit of adoption*, the confidence of children in approaching to God, *by which* Spirit, whatever our different nations and languages may be, *we* can, with equal joy and freedom, present our addresses to his throne, and *cry* with the overflowings of filial affection to him, and fraternal love to each other, *Abba, Father*.[d] *For* as the communication of the visible and extraordinary gifts of *the spirit* both to Jews and Gentiles, witnesses that we are, without distinction in this respect, accepted and owned by God as his people, so also he *himself*, by his internal and gracious operations, *beareth witness with* the answer of *our spirits*, when seriously examined and interrogated, and gives us an inward and joyful assurance, *that we are the children of God*, and personally inte-

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God

15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

[c] *The spirit of bondage*.] Both Mr Locke and Mr Peirce understand this *of the fear of death*, under which the legal dispensation left the Jews; but I rather understand it of that comparatively *servile spirit* which ran through the whole Mosaic œconomy, and which is finely illustrated by Dr Evans in his sermon on this text. Evans's Christian Temp. Vol I.

[d] *Abba, Father*.] I suppose few of my readers will need to be informed, that the word *abba* signifies *father*, in the Jewish language, that is, the Syro-Chaldaic, and the insertion of it here beautifully represents the union of Jewish and Gentile believers, in those devotions, which were dictated by a filial spirit.

SECT. XVI.

Rom. VIII 17

rested in his paternal love. *And* from hence arises a most joyful and triumphant hope; for *if* we are his *children*, *then* we are undoubtedly *heirs* of a glorious and immortal inheritance; we are then *heirs of God*, and shall for ever enjoy him, as our gracious Father, whose presence and love is the very heaven of heaven. *And* we are also *joint-heirs of Christ*, we shall enjoy this happiness as with him, in his sight, and shall be formed to a resemblance of him, as the great foundation of that enjoyment. But then let it ever be remembered, that this is to be taken in connection; it is, *provided that we* are willing, not only to deny ourselves in prohibited carnal gratifications, and to govern our lives by his precepts, but also to *suffer with* [*him*,] that is, in conformity to him, if called out to it for the honour of God, and for the testimony of a good conscience; *that* so *we may also be glorified together* with him, in that world where he now triumphs, and where all the infamy and pain we endure for his sake, shall be amply repaid with honours and joys everlasting.

17 And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 17 WELL may we rejoice in privileges like these; well may we be astonished to think, that they should be bestowed on any of the children of men! That any of them should be *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;* the adopted children of an heavenly Father, and marked out by the communications of his Spirit for an inheritance which he hath prepared! That they should be fitted and enabled to approach him with that endearing compel-15 lation, *Abba, Father*, in their mouths! O that every one of us may know by experience, which alone can teach us, how sweet 14 it is! and if we would obtain and secure this witness, let us see to it, that we be obediently *led by the Spirit of God;* for that Spirit is not where he does not effectually govern; and *if any* 9 *man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of Christ's* disciples, nor is he entitled to any of the privileges of his people.

Let the matter therefore be seriously examined; and let it be determined by inquiry, whether we do on the whole *walk after* 1 *the flesh* or *the Spirit.* Let us guard more and more against that 7 *carnal mind which is enmity against God*, and *cannot be subject to his law*, nor leave room for us, to please God, while it presides and governs in us. Let us often reflect upon that death which would 6 be the consequence of our living after the flesh; and never conceive of ourselves upon any occasion as persons, who, in conse-

quence of something that has already passed, have found out a way to break the connection here established, and in the nature of things essentially established between a carnal mind and death. May our spirits be more and more enlivened by that vital union with a Redeemer which may give us a part in the merits of his righteousness, and in the life it has secured for all true believers; and may the efficacy of his Spirit to raise our souls from a death of sin to a life of holiness, be in us a blessed earnest, that he will complete the work, and at length *quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in us.* When flesh and sense can administer a consolation like this, let us hearken to them: in the mean time, let us remember, let us always remember how much we are debtors to the Spirit: and let us endeavour to act according to these immense obligations.

SECT. XVI.

SECT. XVII.

The glorious prospects, which the gospel sets before us, are represented and urged as a further advantage which it gives us for holiness; even that consummate glory, the discovery of which the whole creation, now subject to vanity, seems to wait and call for. The apostle then mentions consolations which are derived from the assistances of the Spirit in prayer, as further illustrating his main design. Rom. VIII. 18—27.

ROMANS VIII. 18.

ROMANS VIII. 18. FOR I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

SECT. XVII. Rom. VIII 18.

IN representing the high privileges of our adoption, I have been observing, that, if, in consequence of our fidelity to our Saviour, we should suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together with him: and in this persecuted state in which, as Christians, we now are, I beseech you attentively to enter into this thought, that your hearts may be duly quickened and fortified by it. I have for my own part been obliged, amidst the peculiar hazards of my apostolic office, frequently to weigh, and exactly to examine the matter; *and I find upon* the most deliberate *computation, that the sufferings of the present time,* how extreme soever they may be, [*are*] *not worthy* [*of any account*] at all, not so much as worthy of a mention, *when set against that* great and unalterable *glory that shall* in due time *be revealed to us;* but which at present exceeds even our most elevated conceptions, and can never be fully known, till we see each other

SECT. XVII.

wear it, and by consciousnesss feel it in ourselves.

Rom. VIII. 19.

These, my dear brethren, are the views with which I would animate your minds; and surely no object can give them more noble or more delightful employment. *For* methinks, when I look round upon the blasted and wretched state of this world of ours, it seems that all nature does, as it were, call aloud, in pathetic language, for that blessed change which the gospel was intended to introduce. *The earnest expectation of the* whole *creation*[a] so far as it now lies open to our view, *is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God;* for the happy time when he shall appear more openly to avow them, and that reproach and distress shall be rolled away under which they are now disguised

20 and concealed. *For the creation* soon lost its original beauty and felicity, a sad change passed on man and his abode, so that all the visible face of nature *was made subject to vanity* and wretchedness in a variety of forms: and this *not willingly,* not by the personal misbehaviour of those who are now most deeply affected with it, *but by him who subjected* [*it,*] that is, by Adam, when he stood at the head of our race, as a public person, and by his transgression brought us into so deplorable a state. Deplor-

21 able, indeed! but blessed be God not entirely abandoned; since it is still *in hope,* that the salvation so happily begun, shall at length be much more widely extended; *that the crea-*

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope:

21 Because the

[a] *The earnest expectation of the creation,* &c.] This and the following verses have been generally, and not without reason, accounted as difficult as any part of this epistle. The difficulty has perhaps been something increased by rendering κτισις, *creation* in one clause, and *creature* in another. To explain it as chiefly referring to the brutal, or inanimate creation, is insufferable; since the day of the redemption of our bodies will be attended with the conflagration which will put an end to them. The interpretation, therefore, by which Dr. Whitby and Mr. Grove refer it to the Gentile world, is much preferable to this. But on the whole, I think, it gives a much sublimer and nobler sense to suppose it a bold *prosopopœia* by which, on account of the calamity sin brought and continued on the whole unevangelized world, (though few of its inhabitants saw so much of their misery, as actually to desire the remedy,) it is represented as *looking out with eager expectation,* (as the word αποκαραδοκια exactly signifies,) for such a remedy and relief as the gospel brings, by the prevalency of which human nature would be rescued from vanity and corruption, and inferior creatures from tyranny and abuse. Nothing is more common, than to represent *a land* as *mourning* or *rejoicing,* as *calling for rain,* &c. And if this be allowed to be the meaning of these three verses, the gradation in the 23d will be much more intelligible than on any other scheme that I know. See note [b] next page.

creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

tion shall, at least in ages to come, *be set free from the bondage of corruption*, by which men are now abusing themselves and the inferior creatures; and that they shall even be brought *into the glorious liberty of* which we Christians are possessed, in consequence of our being *the sons of God*: as it is certain the creation would be made inconceivably happier than it is, if this blessed dispensation, by which we are introduced into God's family, and taught to do our utmost to diffuse good to all around us, were universally to prevail. In the mean time, 22 such is the state of the whole world, that it seems to call in the most importunate manner *for* this great interposition of Divine power and mercy in its favour; yea, I may say in reference to it, *we know that the whole creation*, ever since the first apostasy of our nature from God, *groaneth, together, and travaileth together until now*; it laboureth in strong pangs to bring on this important birth of sons and daughters unto the Most High.[b] *And not only* doth the whole creation 23 seem [*so*] to travail in pangs around us, when we survey those parts of it where the gospel is yet unknown, *but even we* Christians *ourselves, who have received the first fruits of the Spirit*, and thereby have attained no inconsiderable degrees of liberty and deliverance, even we *groan within ourselves* under many remaining imperfections and burdens; while we are yet *waiting* with strong desire *for the* great event, which may, by way of eminence, be called our *adoption*,[c] as it shall be the public declaration

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now:

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to*

[b] Bring on this important birth, &c.] It is indeed true, that to be in *pangs like a woman in travail* sometimes only signifies being in great distress, where there is no reference to any expected birth; but it seems to me very probable, that the apostle in these metaphors here alludes to what he had been saying before, (verses 14—17, 19, 21.) In all which places he describes Christians as the children of God, and so here expresses the general prevalency of the gospel by the birth of many more, with which nature was pregnant, and of which it longed, as it were, to be delivered: thereby beautifully representing the sad condition of those, who while they have faculties fitting them for standing in such a relation to God as his children, are lost in darkness and vanity, while ignorant of God and the way of salvation; during which time they were even pained by the excellency of their nature, it having no suitable object to act upon. And this is the well adjusted, but generally unobserved gradation I referred to above, note[a]: the world seems to wait, and call, and groan, for the spreading of the gospel; and those among whom it prevails, are still travailing, as it were, with the hope and desire of a yet more exalted state after the resurrection.

[c] *The adoption*, &c.] I entirely agree with Mr. Howe, (Works, Vol. I. p. 680,

SECT. XVII.

Rom. VIII. 23

of it, when our heavenly Father shall produce us before the eyes of the whole world, habited and adorned as becomes his children. You will easily perceive I now refer to *the redemption of our bodies*, their final deliverance from the power of the grave at the general resurrection,[d] which shall introduce us to a happiness, incomparably exceeding the freest and most glorious state into which the earth shall ever be brought, even by the greatest triumph and prevalency of the gospel.

> *wit*, the redemption of our body.

24 This, I say, we are longing and breathing after, and we shall still be so, while we continue here: *for we are saved by hope;* the firm belief and cheerful view of this complete salvation is our great security, amidst so many evils, temptations and dangers. *But hope, which is seen*, that hope which relates merely to objects now visible, *is not* worthy the name of *hope. For what a man sees, how doth he yet hope for?* the more we know of these worldly things, the less shall we amuse ourselves with any high hopes and expectations concerning them.

> 24 For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 *But since we hope for what we see not*, for a happiness far exceeding any thing we have ever seen, or can see, *we patiently wait for it*, and find something in the greatness of the prospect, to repay the tediousness of the most afflicted circumstances, and to excite us to prepare for it by cultivating a suitable temper in all its branches.

> 25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it.

26 Such hope doth our holy profession administer to us, for our support amidst all the difficulties of our Christian course; *and* we have *moreover* this important privilege, that *the* Holy *Spirit* of God graciously *lendeth us his helping hand*[e] *under* all *our* burdens and *infirmities;* so that we are not left to sustain them alone: which is of vast

> 26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for

681,) that here is an allusion to the two kinds of adoption among the Romans; the *first* of which was *private*; the *second public* in the *forum*, when the *adopted* person was solemnly declared and avowed to be the son of the *adopter*. Compare Luke xx. 36.

[d] Deliverance, &c.] That redemption sometimes signifies deliverance, is very certain. Compare Luke xxi. 28; Eph. i. 14; Heb. xi. 35.

[e] *Lendeth us his helping hand.*] I know not how better to render that expressive phrase, *συναντιλαμβανεται ἡμιν*, which literally expresses *the action of one who helps another to raise or bear a burden, by taking hold of it on one side, and lifting it or bearing it with him;* and so it seems to intimate the obligation on us to exert our little strength, feeble as it is, in concurrence with this almighty aid.

we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

moment in many respects, and particularly in the conduct of our devotions; *for* we are surrounded with so much ignorance and prejudice, that in many instances *we do not know what we should pray for as we ought*, because we know not on the whole what may be best for us: *but the Spirit itself manages these affairs for us*, guiding our minds to suitable petitions, and exciting in them correspondent affections, and sometimes inspiring us *with* that intense ardour of holy desire which no words can express, but must therefore vent themselves in *unutterable groanings*. *But* though we are not able to speak these desires, they are not concealed from God: *he who searcheth the* inmost recesses of human *hearts knoweth what* [*is*] *the mind of the Spirit*,[f] he reads all the secret agitations of our spirits which answer to the emotions of his, *for he manages affairs for the saints according to* [*the*] gracious [*will*] and appointment [*of*] *God*[g]: a circumstance which we cannot recollect without the greatest pleasure, and the most cheerful expectations of receiving every suitable blessing in consequence of it, and in answer to these prayers which are presented to God under such influence.

Rom. VIII. 26.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

27

IMPROVEMENT.

For ever adored be the Divine goodness, in sending down his Spirit on such sinful creatures, *to help our infirmities* to implant and to excite graces in our hearts, to be a source of present delights and of eternal happiness. May we feel him helping our infirmities, and improving our joy in the Lord, to such a degree, that all our devotions may be animated sacrifices. Let not the want of expression in that case trouble us; these unutterable groanings are sometimes the sweetest music in the ear of God.

Verse 26

27

[f] *The mind of the Spirit.*] The phrase is here φρονημα τε πνευματος, the very same that was used verse 6. and expresses not merely the *meaning*, but the *temper* and *disposition* of the *mind*, as under the influences *of the Divine Spirit*, pursuing and breathing after such blessings as suits its rational and immortal nature.

[g] *Manages affairs for the saints, &c.*] I agree with a late ingenious writer, several times mentioned before, in rendering εντυγχανει υπερ αγιων, *manages affairs for the saints*, as the office of an intercessor with God is so peculiarly that of Christ, *our Advocate with the Father*, 1 John ii. 1. As for the phrase κατα Θεον, it is capable of many different significations, but I do not think it here signifies the same with ενωπιον τε Θεε, *in the presence of God*, but rather *on the part of God*, that is, by his appointment, or perhaps, as we render it *according to the will of God*. I have therefore retained our version, and included both the senses in the paraphrase.

SECT. XVII.

Verse

Well may such fervent groanings be excited, when we view that great and glorious Object which the gospel proposes to our hope. Let us encounter the sufferings of the present time, with a fortitude becoming those that see them so short and so 18 far over-balanced by the immense and boundless prospects which lie beyond them; prospects of unclouded lustre and unmingled felicity.

19 When we consider the state of that part of the world in which Christianity is unknown, or of those among whom it is a mere empty form; when we consider the vanity to which that part of 20 God's creation is subject, let it move our compassion, and our prayers, that the state of glorious liberty into which God has already brought those who by faith in Christ are his children, 21 may become more universally prevalent; and the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the channel of the seas. O that Divine and omnipotent grace may give a birth to that grand event, in the expectation of which nature seems in pangs; such a birth, that nations might be born in a 22 day; and where the children are born, may it give a more abundant growth and more happy increase.

We have received what the travailing creation has not, the 23 first fruits of the Spirit, and they must surely excite us to groan after the redemption of bodies: yet still with humble submission to the will of God, waiting his wisely appointed hour for the dissolution, and for the restoration of them. That God in whose hand these important events are, best knows how long to exercise our faith, whether in this mortal world, or in the intermediate state; nor should any delay be esteemed long by those who have so cheerful an hope of enjoying God for ever.

SECT. XVIII.

The apostle represents other advantages for holiness which the gospel gives us; particularly those which arise from an assurance that all things shall work together for our good; and from the view we have, as true Christians, of an eternal gracious plan which God has laid for our happiness, in pursuance of which he hath already done such great things for us, especially in sending his Son for our redemption; whence his people may be assured, that no accusation shall prevail against them, and no temptations separate them from his love. Rom. VIII. 28, *to the end.*

ROMANS VIII. 28.

ROMANS VIII. 28. AND we know that

I HAVE taken occasion to hint at many privileges, which in consequence of participating of the gospel, you enjoy: *and* now I must

Rom. VIII. 28.

all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

add this to the rest, that though our afflictions may lie heavy upon us, and though our burdens may continue long; yet *we* assuredly *know, that all things* which occur in the course of Divine Providence, either in their present and immediate, or future and more remote consequences, do, and shall *work together for* real and everlasting *good to them that* sincerely and prevalently *love* the blessed *God,*[a] *and are* by Divine grace *called,* and formed to this happy principle, *according to* [*his*] gracious and effectual *purpose.*

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

29 We have this confidence, I say, because God in his eternal counsels designed this, and appointed a proper series of subordinate causes to make way for that blessed event in which all is to terminate; establishing a certain connection between the one and the other; a connection, which in the greatest distress is our confidence and our joy, *For whom he foreknew,* as the objects of his peculiarly favourable regards,[b] knowing with everlasting complacency his own thoughts of peace towards them, (compare Jer. xxix. 2.) *he did also predestinate* [*to*] stand in a peculiar relation to the great Redeemer, and [*be*] *made* in due time *conformable to the image of* that glorious and blessed Person, even Jesus *his* only-begotten and best-beloved *Son,* who is now exalted high above all heavens. He appointed, I say, such a conformity between him and them, *that he might be,* and appear to be, *the first-born among many brethren*: and might at length see many of his brethren by his means sharing with him in that happiness to which he

[a] *All things* which occur in the course of Divine Providence, *&c.*] It is so plain from the whole context, that the apostle only speaks of providential events, and it is so evident, that the universal expression *all* is sometimes to be taken in a limited sense, that it must argue, I fear, something worse than weakness, to pretend that sin is comprehended in the apostle's assertion. Plato's sentence so nearly parallel to this, is a commentary infinitely preferable to such an explication. "Whether a righteous man be in poverty, sickness, or any other calamity, we must conclude that it will turn to his advantage, either in life or death." See Plato de Rep. lib. ix.

[b] *Whom he foreknew,* as the objects of his peculiarly favourable regards.] *To know,* sometimes signifies *to favour,* Amos iii. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Exod. xxxiii. 12, 17; Psal. i. 6; Jer. x. 14; Rom. xi. 2; 1 Pet. i. 2; Hos. xiii. 5; and they who interpret these verses, as Mr. Locke, and many others do, of God's intending to bring the Gentiles into the church on a footing of equal privileges with the Jews, must certainly take the word in this sense. But the reader will easily perceive, by my paraphrase, that I consider them as applicable to all true Christians, whether originally of Jewish or Gentile descent; as the privileges themselves relate not to communities, as such, but to individuals

SECT. XVIII.

Rom. VIII. 30

is now received, and in which he shall for ever shine, distinguished from them all in rays of peculiar glory. To this felicity did the Father of mercy decree to raise a part of our fallen and miserable race; *and those whom he* thus *predestinated he* in due time *hath called*, or will hereafter in their succeeding generations call, by the invitations of the gospel and operations of his Spirit, to repent and believe, that so they might claim the promised blessings, in virtue of that everlasting covenant which they cordially embrace; *and whom he hath* thus *called, he hath*, on their compliance with that call, *justified*,[c] freed them from the condemning sentence of his law, and given them a pleadable right to a full acquittal at his bar; *and* those *whom he hath* thus *justified, he hath also glorified*,[d] that is, he hath appointed they should ere long attain to complete glory and happiness, to which, by virtue of their union with him, they may be said even now to arrive. (Eph. iii. 4.)

30 Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 On the whole, *what shall we therefore say to these things*, or conclude upon this review? surely we may courageously defy all our enemies, and say, *If* that *God* who hath all power in himself, and all the events of time and eternity, under his direction, [*be*] as we have heard, *for us, who* [*can*] presume to [*be*] *against us*, or be able to do us any hurt by the fiercest opposition,

31 What shall we then say to these things? if God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

[c] *Whom he hath called, he hath justified.*] Barclay pleads that this *justification* must include *holiness*, or it is left out of the chain. Barcl. Apol. p. 221. But the apostle had so plainly declared in the beginning of the chapter, that a *freedom from condemnation* was the peculiar privilege of *those who walk after the Spirit;* that it was the less necessary for him here distinctly to mention *sanctification.*

[d] *Whom he justified he glorified.*] It is plain, that *justification* is here considered as distinct from, and prior to *glorification;* and consequently, that there is a sense in which believers may be said to be *justified* now, (as they often are, compare Luke xviii. 14; Acts xiii. 39; Rom. v. 9; 1 Cor. vi. 11,) though it is at the great day, that their complete *justification* will be declared, and there seems generally to be an ultimate reference to that great transaction, in the use of this *forensick term* (Mat xii. 37; Rom. ii. 13; chap. iii. 30.) To suppose that Christians are said *to be glorified* merely in reference *to the Spirit of glory now resting upon them,* (1 Pet. iv. 14,) is limiting the phrase to a sense less sublime and extensive than it generally has, particularly verse 17, 18; 2 Cor. iv 17; Col i. 27, chap. iii. 4. 1 Thess. ii. 12, 1 Pet. v. 10, to which a multitude of other texts might be added, where glory refers to the exaltation and blessedness of the future state.—This is a memorable instance, and there are scores, and perhaps hundreds more, in which things, that shall certainly and speedily be done, are spoken of as done already. Moses gave a remarkable example of this noble language of faith, *in his song*, (Exod. xv. 13, *&c.*) *on the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea;* and the prophets and apostles have continued it in a variety of triumphant passages, which it will be a great pleasure to the pious reader to observe for himself.

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

while we are guarded by such a Protector? Yea, I may add, not only what we have to fear, but what have we not to hope and expect, in connection with such views as these? *he that spared not his own*, his proper and only-begotten *Son*, when even his blood and life came into question; *but* willingly *delivered him up* to agony and death, that he might be a Sacrifice *for us all, how shall he not with him freely grant us all* other *things*, subservient to our truest happiness; which may now be regarded as the purchase of his blood? We may reasonably conclude that what is now withheld, would be detrimental, rather than advantageous to us.

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

33 Upon the whole, then, we may take courage, and say, *who shall lodge any accusation against the elect of God*,[e] against those who love him, and have been as we before observed, predestinated and called according to his eternal purpose; [*is it*] *God?* What! *he who* himself *justifieth?*[f] as the prophet in his own case expresses it, (Isa. l. 8, 9.) He is ready to answer all objections, and solemnly to pronounce us absolved.

34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right-hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

34 *Who* [*is*] *he* then *that condemneth?* [*is it*] the Lord Jesus *Christ*, whom we know to be appointed as the final Judge; What! doth *he* condemn, *who hath died* to expiate our guilt, and rescue us from condemnation? *yea rather*, (which is the most delightful consideration of all,) *who is risen again?* shall he undo the purposes of his death and resurrection? He *who is now* sitting *at the right hand of God*, where he appears under a quite contrary character, *and is also making intercession for us*; undertaking the management of our affairs, and, far from accusing us, appears ready to answer all accusations brought against us, and to frustrate all the designs of our enemies?

[e] *Who shall lodge any accusation*, &c.] This εγκαλεσει plainly signifies.—By *the elect of God* many understand the Gentiles; but, as it is certain the phrase, whatever it imports, is not to be confined to them, and is presently after used of *believing Jews*, (Rom. xi 5, 7, 28) it seems highly reasonable, to consider it here, as including them also; especially as their unbelieving brethren might be ready to lodge the heaviest accusations against them, as deserters and apostates from their own law, if they acted on the principles the apostles had been laying down in the former chapter.

[f] *God who justifieth*, &c.] I here follow the pointing proposed by the learned and ingenious Dr. Sam. Harris, (in his Observations, p. 54, 55.) which greatly illustrates the spirit of this passage, and shews, how justly that author adds, that it is remarkably in the grand manner of Demosthenes.

SECT. XVIII. Rom. VIII. 35

Confident therefore in his protection and favour, we defy them all; and say in strains of yet sublimer triumph, *who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* Who or what shall dissolve that union to him, which is our great security, and be able to alienate our hearts from him, who is the Source of such invaluable blessings, and hath displayed such incomparable riches of grace; [*Shall*] the severest *affliction*[g], *or* the most pressing *straits*, *or* the most cruel *persecution*, to the inconveniencies and extremities of which we may indeed be exposed in our Christian warfare; *or hunger*, if we be starving in desolate places;[h] *or nakedness*, if it had not so much as sheep-skins, or goat-skins to cover it; *or* in a word, any other *peril*, to which in our different situations we may be exposed, *or* even the drawn *sword* of our blood-thirsty enemies ready to be plunged into our defenceless bosoms? It may indeed cut short the residue of our mortal days; *as it is written*, in words which may justly be applied to us, (Psal. xliv. 22.) "*For thy sake we* "*are* without remorse *killed all the day long*, "*we are accounted us* so many *sheep destined to* "*the slaughter*, and delivered over to it without "resistance on our part, or mercy on that of "our enemies." *Nevertheless*, while we appear in so weak and helpless a state, *we do in all these things more than conquer*, we triumph in certain and illustrious victory, *through him who hath loved us*, and having redeemed us to God by his own blood, will secure us amidst all these temptations, and finally shew that our sufferings and death have been precious in his sight, and have made a part in his merciful scheme for our more exalted happiness.

38 Well may I thus boast of the securest and completest victory, even amidst the combat; *for I am persuaded, that neither* the fear of *death*, in any imaginable form of terror, *nor* the hope

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.)

37 Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor

[g] *Shall affliction, &c.*] None can imagine that Christ would love a good Christian the less for enduring such extremities for his sake. The text must therefore be intended to express the apostle's confidence, that God's invariable love to his people, illustrated already in so glorious a manner, would engage him to support them under all their trials, by vital communications of Divine strength

[h] *Hunger.*] The word λιμὸς is more extensive than *famine*, and may be applied to personal, as well as public necessity.

Rom. VIII. 38

angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

and desire of *life*, in the most agreeable circumstances that can be imagined, *nor* all the efforts of infernal *angels*, *nor* of *principalities*, *nor* of *powers*,[i] however various their rank, however subtile their artifices, however furious and malignant their rage may be, *nor things present*, difficult as they are, *nor things future*, extreme as they may possible prove *Nor* the

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord

39 *height* of prosperity, *nor* the *depth* of adversity, *nor any other creature*, above or beneath, in heaven, earth or hell, *shall be able to separate* any of *us*, who are Christians indeed, *from the love of* the Almighty and ever-blessed *God*, *which is* graciously given us *in Christ Jesus our Lord*,[k] by a tenure so certain, that it shall never be lost: and being thus secure that nothing shall separate us from that, we assuredly know that nothing can, on the whole, hurt us; and feel a courage which nothing can dismay.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 29, 30 O BLESSED souls indeed, who having been in the eternal counsels of the Divine love *foreknown and predestinated*, are, in consequence thereof, *called and justified*, as the earnest of being ere long *glorified!* Who would not desire to see his own title to privileges so inestimable as these? And how shall we know that we have our part in them? how but by securing an evidence, 28 that we love God? Then may we be assured that *all things shall work together for our good*, and glory in it that we are the elect 33 of God, to whose *charge therefore nothing shall be alledged*, 34 since *God justifieth*, whom *none shall condemn*, *since Christ died* to expiate our sins, and is *ascended* into heaven continually *to intercede* for us In cheerful dependence on his patronage and care, let us bid defiance to all our enemies, and 35 be willing to submit to the greatest extremities, since they shall 36

[i] *Angels, principalities and powers*] Elsner, (Observ Vol. II. p 42) has sufficiently shewn that *good angels* are sometimes called *powers*, to express their being used as instruments of the *Divine power*, (compare Eph i 21, chap. ii. 10, Col i 16, chap ii. 10) as likewise that ἀρχαι may signify *magistrates*, compare Tit iii 1 But as it is certain that *evil angels* are called *principalities and powers*, (Eph vi 12, Col ii 15) and as that interpretation of the words best suits the context, (for it is not to be thought that good angels would attempt to separate men from Christ's love) I must adhere to it

[k] *Shall separate us*, &c] Archbishop Tillotson thinks, (Vol I p 491) Paul speaks thus confidently in reference to himself, and the experience he had passed through of so peculiar a nature, but he seems to me to found the argument on considerations common to all Christians, ver. 28, and the connection is such, that if these latter clauses are limited to St. Paul, I do not see how the preceding can be extended farther

SECT. XVIII.

not be able to *separate us from the love of Christ*, even *though for his sake we should be killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

38, 39 O blessed souls, whom *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor any other creature*, shall be able to divide and cut off from *the love of God!* What then can harm us? what evil can we then suffer? what good can we want? When God is for us, and when we are sensible of his love in giving us his Son, how can we allow ourselves to suspect his readiness with him to give us all things truly reasonable or desirable? All other blessings, when compared with these, will appear unworthy of a mention; and we should have great reason to suspect, that they were not ours, if we did not find a heart superlatively to value them above every thing else.

SECT. XIX.

The apostle now finding it necessary to speak more expressly of the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, introduces the subject with very tender expressions of his regard to his Jewish brethren; and then shews, that the rejection of a considerable part of the seed of Abraham, and even of the posterity of Isaac, from the peculiar privileges of God's chosen people, was an incontestible fact, which the Jews could not but grant to have happened, that is, with regard to the descendants of Ishmael and of Esau. Rom. IX. 1—13.

ROMANS IX. 1.

SECT. XIX.

Rom. IX. 1.

THUS, my brethren, I have endeavoured to animate you by leading your meditations to those inestimable privileges which we receive in virtue of the gospel, which renders us so far superior to all the hardships we can endure; and I hope the thought of them will be abundantly sufficient to establish your adherence to it. Faithfulness will also oblige me to add, that as all who embrace and obey this gospel, whether Jews or Gentiles, are accepted of God, so all who reject it, are rejected by him [a]. And lest, while I maintain this important truth, any

ROMANS IX. 1.

I SAY the truth in

[a] As all who embrace, &c.] This the apostle had intimated all along in the preceding discourse, which is addressed to Christians, as Christians, without any regard to their having been Jews or Gentiles; nay, he had expressly declared in the 2d and 3d chapters, that their having been Gentiles would be no obstruction. And it is certain, the peculiar oppositions and persecutions, which the believing Jews met with from their obstinate countrymen, would make encouragements and consolations like those suggested in the eighth chapter, as necessary for them as for any Christians in the world. So very much mistaken have some learned commentators been in the peculiar turn they have given to that chapter, and several passages in those preceding it.

Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

SECT. XIX.

Rom. IX. 1.

should imagine that I bear hard upon my dear countrymen the Jews, on account of any personal injury, which I, or my Christian brethren, of whose sufferings I have been speaking, (chap. viii. 35—39,) have received from them, or by their means; I begin this discourse with the most solemn assurance I can give you to the contrary. And herein, *I say the truth in Christ*, I speak with that candour and integrity which becomes a Christian, and as in the presence of that blessed Redeemer, who searches all hearts. He knows that *I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness* as to the truth of what I say, *in the Holy Ghost*, as under his influence who so thoroughly discerns the soul on which he operates.

2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

2 With all this solemnity, on so great an occasion, do I declare to you, *that I have great grief, and incessant anguish in my heart*, when I think of what hath happened, and will happen unto them, in consequence of their opposition to the gospel.

3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh:

3 *For* methinks, if I may be allowed to express myself so, *I could* even *wish that* as Christ subjected himself to the curse, that he might deliver us from it, so *I myself* likewise *were made an anathema after the example of Christ;*[b] like him exposed to all the execrations of an enraged people, and even to the infamous and accursed death of crucifixion itself, *for the sake of my brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh*, that they might thereby be delivered from the guilt they have brought upon their own heads, and become entitled to the forfeited and rejected blessings of the Messiah's kingdom.

4 Who are Israel-

4 So cordial and disinterested a regard have I for

[b] *Made an anathema after the example of Christ.*] This sense is given by the learned Dr. Waterland, (Serm. Vol. I. p. 77, 78.) who urges the manner in which απο is used, 2 Tim. i. 3, *απο των προγονων, after the example of my forefathers.* Compare 1 John iii. 16. Next to this I should incline to the interpretation given by Dr. Clarke, (Seventeen Serm. p. 340.) who supposes the apostle means, that he could be content that Christ should give him up to such calamities as these, to which the Jewish people were doomed for rejecting him; so that if they could all be centered in one person, he could be willing they should unite in him, could he thereby be a means of saving his countrymen. Compare Deut. vii. 26; Josh. vi. 17, chap. vii. 12.—Grotius understands it of a separation from the church of Christ, (which is sometimes called by the name Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12; Gal. iii. 27;) or of excommunication.—Elsner, (who agreeable to Dr. Clarke's interpretation, joins απο τȣ Χριςȣ with ηυχομην,) shews very well, as many other commentators have done, how very absurd it would be to suppose he meant that he could be content to be delivered over to everlasting misery for the good of others.

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my dear nation, *who are Israelites*,[c] the seed of Jacob, that eminent patriarch, who, as a prince, had power with God, and prevailed; *whose the* spiritual *adoption* [*is*[d]] in consequence of which, as a people, they were called the sons and daughters of the most high God; *and the glory*, which in the Shechinah resided visibly among them on the mercy-seat;[e] *and the covenants* made successively, first with Abraham and then with Moses, *and* with the whole Jewish people in him; who were honoured with *the giving of the law* in such solemn pomp, *and* received with the precepts of that excellent polity, an exact ritual for *the service* [*of God*] in their tabernacles afterwards practised in their temple with unequalled solemnity *and* magnificence; who were also *the* heirs of such peculiar and important *promises*, relating not only to their abode in Canaan, under the administration of an equal and miraculous providence, but likewise including and centering in the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, who was to arise among them.

ites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God* and the promises;

5 I cannot but have a respectful and tender regard for a nation thus dignified and distinguished; a nation, *whose* privileges [*are*] handed down to them from so many illustrious ancestors, in a long descent, who were in their respective ages *the* great *fathers* of the world and church; *and from whom*, to crown the whole, *according to the flesh Christ* himself is [*descended*] *who*, though found in fashion like a man, and truly partaker of our nature in all its sinless infirmities, is also possessed of a Divine nature, by virtue of which, he *is above all* our conceptions and praises, above creatures of the highest order, and indeed *God blessed for ever*,[f] the wor-

5 Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

[c] *Who are Israelites.*] The apostle, with great address, enumerates these privileges of the Jews; both that he might shew how honourably he thought of them, and that he might awaken their solicitude not to sacrifice that Divine favour by which they had been so eminently and so long distinguished.

[d] *The spiritual adoption is.*] That is, whom God hath taken into a special covenant with himself, whereby he stands engaged ever to act the part of a God and Father to them, and to own them as his children. Deut. xiv. 1; Jer. xxxi. 9; Exod. iv. 22; Hos. xi. 1.

[e] Resided on the mercy-seat.] Hence the *ark* was called *the glory* Psal. lxxviii. 61; 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22, to which some add Psal. lxiii. 2.

[f] *Above all, God blessed for ever.*] How ingenious soever that conjecture may be thought, by which some would read this ὧν ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ἐπι παντων, to answer to ὧν οἱ πατερες, (*whose are the fathers, and whose is the supreme God;*) I think it would be extremely dangerous to follow

SECT. XIX.

Rom. IX. 9

thy Object of our humblest adoration, as well as unreserved dependence, love and obedience: *Amen*: let his divine glories be ever proclaimed and confessed! May all the house of Israel know this assuredly, and fall down before him, as in and with the Father of all, their Lord and their God!.

6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel, which are of Israel:

6 Yet, notwithstanding all these tender prejudices in favour of my own dear countrymen, I cannot defend or excuse their conduct; nor must I conceal the ungrateful truth asserted above, that by rejecting the gospel, they bring upon themselves rejection from God. But to prevent mistakes, let me in the first place observe, that it is *not* to be supposed, I would *by any means* insinuate, *that the word of God hath fallen* ineffectual *to the ground*, even all that glorious system of promises, by which he engaged to bestow protection, favour and happiness upon his people. *For* in order to provide against any such allegation, I must insist upon it, as a very certain and apparent truth, that *all* [*are*] *not* reckoned to be the *Israel* of God, so as to be the heirs of the promises made to his people, *who are* descended *of Israel* by natural generation.

7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

7 *Neither because they are the seed of Abraham*, the head of the holy family according to the flesh, [*are they*] *all children* of the promise; *but* you know it is said, (Gen. xxi. 12,) though Ishmael were the son of Abraham long before, "*In* "*Isaac*, then unborn, *shall thy seed be called*: "the descendants of Isaac shall be spoken of as "thy seed, by way of eminence, to the exclu-"sion of those who may spring from thee by "thine other children."

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

8 *That is*, on the whole, *not the children of the flesh* alone, nor any of them merely as such, [*are*] *the children of God*, *but the children of the promise*, in one peculiar line *are accounted as the seed* of Abraham, and

this reading, unsupported as it is by any critical authority of manuscripts, or ancient quotations.—Nor can I find any authority for rendering Θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, *God be blessed for ever.* I must therefore render, and paraphrase, and improve this memorable text, as a proof of Christ's proper Deity, which I think, the opposers of that doctrine have never been able, nor will ever be able to answer. Though common sense must teach, what Christians have always believed, that it is not with respect to the Father, but to the created world, that this august title is given to him. Compare 1 Cor. xv. 27, &c.

SECT. XIX.

Rom. IX. 9.

honoured with the adoption; *For this* [*is*] *the word of the promise*, (Gen. xviii. 10, 14,) "*according to this time*, that is, reckoning the "conception of the child from hence, *I will* "*come* [*to thee*,] in a way of gracious and merciful interposition, *and Sarah shall have a* "*son*:" which was said, when Hagar had many years been Abraham's wife, and had long since borne a son to him.

10 *Nor* was [*this*] the *only* instance of the kind; *but* in the case of *Rebecca*, *when she was with child* of twins *by one man*, that is, *our father*
11 *Isaac*; *While* [*the children*] *were not yet born*, *and had done neither good* to merit, *nor evil* to forfeit the Divine favour, *that the* sovereign *purpose of God*, *according to* his free *election*, *might stand* stedfast, and appear *not* to be formed in respect *of* the *works* done by either, *but* according to the mere good pleasure *of him who calleth* things that do not yet exist into being, and dis-
12 poseth of all according to his own will: *It was said to her*, when consulting the Divine oracle on the unusual commotion she felt in her womb, that two different people should proceed from the birth then approaching, (Gen. xxv. 23,) and "*that the elder* of them, that is, the posterity "of Esau, *should serve the younger*, that is, the
13 "descendants of Jacob." *As it is* also *written*, (Mal. i. 2, 3.) "*I have loved Jacob*, *and* "*hated Esau*, that is, I have greatly preferred "the former to the latter;[g] bestowing many

9 For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

10 And not only *this*, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our Father Isaac.

11 (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.)

12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger

13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

[g] Greatly preferred the former to the latter.] That to *love* and *hate* have this sense in scripture, is evident. Compare Gen. xxix. 31; Luke xiv. 26; John xii. 25; and the notes there. These words in their connection with the preceding and following, do indeed prove, that God acts with a sovereign and unaccountable freedom in the dispensation of his favours; and do, I think, consequentially prove, that it was not upon the foresight of the obedience and piety of Jacob on the one hand, or the profaneness of Esau on the other, that this preference was given; for then the argument taken from their having actually done neither good nor evil, would be very weak, since, to an omniscient God, that which he certainly foreknew would be, is with regard to his purpose of events to succeed it, as if it already were. Nevertheless, it is certain the apostle does not here speak of the *eternal state of Jacob* and *Esau*, (whatever some may suppose deducible from what he says,) nor does he indeed so much speak of their *persons*, as of their *posterity*; since it is plainly to that *posterity* that both the *prophecies*, which he quotes in support of his argument, refer. Gen. xxv. 23; Mal. i. 2, 3. *His laying waste the heritage of the Edomites for the dragons of the wilderness*, is so different a thing from his appointing the *person* of *Esau* to *eternal misery* by a mere act of sovereignty, without regard to any thing done or to be done by him to deserve it, that I will rather submit to any censure from my fellow-servants, than deal so freely with my Maker, as to conclude the one from the other.

SECT. XIX.

Rom. IX. 13.

"peculiar privileges and favours upon the posterity of Jacob, which I have denied to that "of Esau, whose habitation I have laid waste "for the dragons of the wilderness, while that "of his brother flourished in the richest abun-"dance of all things." We see then, to close this branch of the argument, that the exclusion of a considerable part of the seed of Abraham, and even of the descendants of Isaac, from the special promises of God, is not only a case which may be supposed possible, but a case, which according to the Jewish scriptures themselves, hath actually happened.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1, 2 — LET that affection which the apostle expresses for the Jews, *his countrymen and brethren according to the flesh*, and the tender and pathetic representation which he makes of the privileges which they once enjoyed, awaken in our hearts an earnest solicitude, that they may by divine grace be brought back; that they may again be adopted into the family from which they have been cut off, again clothed with the glory which is departed from 4 them; that, through him who was given for a covenant to the people, they may receive the law of life and grace, be formed to that spiritual service which it introduces, instead of their pompous ritual, and embrace the promises on which the faith and 5 hope of their illustrious fathers was fixed.

Let it likewise teach us spiritual compassion for our kindred, 3 who are strangers to Christ, and let us be willing to submit to the greatest difficulties, and think nothing too much to be done or borne for their recovery.

Let our souls pay an humble homage to him, who is, in such an incommunicable and sublime sense, the Son of God, as to be himself *over all, God blessed for evermore*. With prostrate re- 5 verence let us adore him, as our Lord, and our God, and repose that unbounded confidence in him which such an assemblage of Divine perfections will warrant, putting our most hearty amen to every ascription of glory, to every anthem of praise, addressed to him.

And, to conclude, since we see that many of the children of 6, 7 Abraham, and of Isaac, failed of any share in the special promises of God, let us learn to depend on no privilege of birth, on no relation to the greatest and best of men. May we seek to be inserted into the family of God, by his adopting love in Christ 10-13 Jesus, and to maintain the lively exercise of faith; without which no child of Abraham was ever acceptable to God, and with which none of the children of strangers have ever failed of a share in his mercy and favour.

SECT. XX.

The Apostle shews, that the sovereign choice of some individuals to peculiar privileges, to which none had any claim, and the sovereign appointment, from among many criminals, of some to peculiar and exemplary punishments, was perfectly consistent both with reason and scripture. Rom. IX. 14—24.

ROMANS IX. 14.

SECT. XX. Rom. IX. 14.

I HAVE already shewn you how possible it is that persons descended from Abraham, and even from Isaac, may be cut off from the special promises of God; as the posterity, first of Ishmael, and then of Esau, evidently were. *What therefore shall we say* to this? [*Is there*] *unrighteousness with God* in the proceedings and distributions of his providence, in this or in any other instance to be produced? *God forbid* we should insinuate any thing of that nature. It is, in the highest consistence with justice, matter of the freest choice, to whom such favours shall be

15 granted. *For he saith to Moses,* (Exod. xxxiii. 19,) when intimating a gracious purpose toward Israel, though they had broke his covenant so soon after the first confirmation of it, and by an act of flagrant idolatry had justly merited immediate destruction, *I will have mercy on whomsoever I will have mercy, and will compassionate whomsoever I please to compassionate,* so as to dispense acts of pardon according to my own sovereign pleasure.

16 Jacob and Esau, of whom I was speaking just above, may be farther considered as an illustration of the sovereignty of the Divine dispensations in such cases: the latter of them, after he had foolishly sold his birth-right, was exceedingly desirous of obtaining his father's blessing, and run out eagerly to hunt venison for him, (Gen. xxvii. 5—30;) nevertheless, it was bestowed upon Jacob. [*It is*] *not therefore,* you see, to be referred into the forwardness of *him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but* it is *of God that sheweth mercy,* to one rather than another, on sovereign reasons, which we cannot penetrate, but must always believe to be worthy of himself.

17 And *moreover* we may add, that such is the

ROMANS IX. 14. WHAT shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

16 So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

17 For the scrip-

SECT. XX.

Rom. IX. 17

ture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

conduct of God in other instances, when of various sinners he appoints one, rather than another, to be a monument of special vengeance. For *the scripture says to Pharaoh,*[a] (Exod. ix. 16,) " *For this cause have I raised thee up,* to that " height of eminence in which thou gloriest,[b] " *that I may* remarkably *show forth my power* " *in thee, and that my name,* in consequence of " distinguished judgments to be righteously inflicted upon thee, *may be celebrated through all* " *the earth,* in the most distant nations and remotest ages." And accordingly he hardened his heart, that he should not let Israel go; that is, he took measures which he knew would be attended with that effect, and at last brought the extremity of his wrath upon him.

18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy,* and whom he will he hardeneth.

18 *So then* we must, after all our objections, rest the matter here, that the blessed God, as he is uncontroulable, so he is also unaccountable in his dispensations: that in choosing this or that creature to distinguished favours, or appointing this or that sinner to deserved punishment, *he hath mercy on whom he will* have mercy, *and he hardeneth* and destroyeth *whom he will.*

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find

19 *But thou wilt* perhaps be ready, while thou readest this declaration, to raise an objection against it, and *say to me,* If " God acts thus, " *why doth he then find fault,* and blame his " creatures for their obstinacy, when he deter- " mines to give what he knows will in fact prove

[a] *Moreover the scripture says, &c.*] It is plain, that this is no proof of what immediately goes before; I therefore choose to render γαρ by *moreover,* which is consistent with making it introductory to what proves something asserted at some distance, if it come in as a co-ordinate proof. This is so important a remark in the illustration of scripture, and clears an attentive reader of so many embarrassments, that I hope I shall be excused repeating it on different occasions. The reader will observe, the apostle does not produce an instance of an innocent person being made an object of divine displeasure, out of mere sovereignty, but one of the most insolent sinners that the world ever knew.

[b] *I have raised thee up.*] Some would render it, *I have made thee to stand,* that is, I have supported thee during the former plagues, that I might make thee a more remarkable example of vengeance; but though, (as Dr. Shuckford, Connect. Vol. II. p. 433, and many others observe,) that agree with διετηρηθης, the word used by the LXX. in their version of the text in question, and with the original העמדתיך, yet it does not answer to the Greek word used by St. Paul, ἐξηγειρα. If, as some writers suppose, the Pharaoh here spoken of were an Egyptian king, (I think Apophis,) who made his way to the throne by treason, incest, and murder, the words had a singular weight, in the sense we have here given them. Mr. Taylor explains it of his having been recovered from the plague of blains, which was indeed said to have been upon Pharaoh, Exod. ix. 15, 16, and this may possibly be the true sense; but I think the other stronger and nobler.

SECT. XX.

Rom. IX. 19

"a prevailing occasion to it? *Who hath* ever, "in any instance, *resisted*, or who can ever be "able to resist *his will?* If he hath determined "by such methods to destroy a nation, or a "person, who can prevent it, or prevent those "evils, which shall, according to his high ap-"pointments of providence, be in fact the "means of bringing on that destruction?"

fault? for who hath resisted his will?

20 *Nay, but* let me rather reply, Who art thou, *O* vain, weak, and ignorant *man*, with all thy boasted wisdom and penetration, *who art thou who* thus arrogantly *enterest into a debate with* the all wise, almighty and all-gracious *God*, and chargest his proceedings as arbitrary and unjust? Surely it becomes us, whenever we treat such a subject, to do it with the humblest reverence, and through the whole to remember the infinite distance between him and us. *Shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed [it,] Why hast thou made me thus?* Let us remember he is our almighty Creator, and not imagine we can ever have any room or right to expostulate with him, or in any circumstance to complain of him.

20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus?

21 *Hath not the potter power over [his] clay*,[c] as God himself represents the case, (Jer. xviii 4—6,) *out of the same mass to make one vessel to* uses of *honour, and another to* the basest offices of *dishonour;* and to break and renew it at his

21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

22 pleasure? [*What*] then is it to thee, or what right hast thou to find fault, *if God resolving* at last *to manifest* the terrors of [*his*] *wrath*, and *to make known his* awful and tremendous *power*, in their aggravated destruction, *hath* in the mean time, *endured with much long suffering* those who shall finally appear to be *the vessels of wrath* which are *fitted to destruction?*[d] Is he to account to thee for punishing them who justly deserve punishment, at what time, and in what manner he pleases, and to ask thy leave to delay or

22 *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

[c] *Potter power over [his] clay.*] It is observable, that Plutarch uses the very same similitude with this before us; and Aristophanes, among other contemptuous expressions, by which he describes the frailty of human creatures, calls them *πλασματα πηλου, vessels of clay.* See Bos. in loc.

[d] *Endures with much long suffering the vessels of wrath, &c.*] The apostle seems here to have had the impenitent Jews in his thought, though he did not think it proper expressly to name them. It is certain, they were *vessels of wrath*, and that they were long borne with, under many advantages, which they ungratefully abused.

23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?

24 Even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

SECT. XX.

Rom. IX. 23.

to execute the stroke of his righteous vengeance? *And* [*what if*,] on the other hand, *that he may make known*, in the most affecting and endearing manner *the riches of his glory*, and display his compassions *in* those whom he will make *the vessels of mercy*, *he* graciously waits upon them, and [*long endures*] them,[e] even [*those*] *whom he hath*, by the power of his own grace, *previously prepared to glory*, that they might in the most honourable manner be at length called to partake of it? *Even us*, *whom* 24 *he hath* already *called* into the happy number of his people, *not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles* too. Shall he make an apology to thee, O man, that he hath appointed some of our sinful race to such mercy, that he hath exercised much long-suffering towards them, that he hath at length wrought upon them by his effectual grace; or that determining to deal thus mercifully with some of Jacob's race, he hath added to their number others whom he hath taken from Gentile nations? Know thy place, and acquiesce in humble silence. Allow the blessed God to do what he will with his own, and let not thine eye be evil because he is good.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 14

LET us learn from the memorable section which we have now been reading, humbly to adore the righteousness and holiness of God, in all the most amazing displays of his sovereignty, which we are sure are always consistent with it. Let us own his right to confer on whom he pleaseth, those favours which none of us can pretend to have deserved; and adore his wonderful goodness, in choosing to exercise mercy and compassion 15 on any of the children of men, yea, on many, who must own themselves in the number of those who had the least claim to it. He hath of his mere goodness given us those privileges, as Christians, and as Protestants, which he hath withheld from

[e] *He waits and endures.*] As it is certain, there is an ellipsis in these words, and that something must be supplied, it seems most natural to borrow a word or two from the preceding verse, to complete the sense. Every attentive reader will, I doubt not, infer for himself the great difference of phrase in which they who are *vessels of wrath*, and they who are *vessels of mercy*, are spoken of: it being said simply of the former, that they were *fitted for destruction*, but of the latter, *that God prepared them for glory*. A distinction of so great importance, that I heartily wish we may ever keep it in view, to guard us against errors, on the right hand, or on the left. Compare Mat. xxv. 34, 41, and the note there.

SECT. XX.

most nations under heaven. And if we improve them aright, we have undoubtedly reason to look upon ourselves *as vessels of mercy* whom *he is preparing for* eternal *glory*. Let us adore his distinguishing favour to us, and arrogate nothing to ourselves. It is *neither of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*, and *worketh in us both to will, and to do, of his own good pleasure.*

Verse 23, 16

22 Long did his patience wait on us; and let that patience be for ever adored! It shall be glorified even in those that perish: for he is so far from destroying innocent creatures by a mere arbitrary act of power and terror, that he endureth with much long-suffering, those who by their own incorrigible wickedness prove *vessels of wrath*, and whom the whole assembled world shall confess fitted for the destruction to which they shall finally be con-18 signed. That after long abuse of mercy they are hardened, and perhaps after long hardness are at length destroyed: yea, that some of the vilest of men are exalted by Providence to a 17 station that makes their crimes conspicuous, as those of Pharaoh, till at length he shews forth his power the more awfully, and maketh his name the more illustrious, by their ruin, is certainly consistent with that justice which the Judge of the whole earth will never violate.

But if in tracing subjects of this kind, difficulties arise beyond 20 the stretch of our feeble thought, let us remember that we are men, and let us not dare to reply against God. Retiring into our own ignorance and weakness, as those that are less than 21 nothing, and vanity, before him, let us dread by any arrogant censure to offend him who has so uncontroulable a power over us. *As clay in the hand of the potter, so are we in the hand of the Lord our God.* Let us acquiesce in the form he has given us, in the rank he has assigned us; and instead of perplexing ourselves about those secrets of his counsels, which it is impossible for us to penetrate, let us endeavour to purify ourselves from whatever would displease him; that so we may, in our respective stations, be vessels of honour, fit for the use of our Master now, and entitled to the promise of being acknowledged as his, in that glorious day when he shall make up his jewels.

SECT. XXI.

The apostle shews, that the admission of the Gentiles to the privileges of God's peculiar people, when Israel should be rejected, was so far from being inconsistent with scripture, that it had been actually foretold, both by Hosea and Isaiah. Rom. IX. 25, *to the end.*

ROMANS IX. 25.

I HAVE been remonstrating as to the unreasonableness of quarrelling with the Divine dis-

ROMANS IX. 25.

AS he saith also in

SECT. XXI.

Rom. IX. 25.

Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her Beloved, which was not beloved.

26 And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; there shall they be called, The children of the living God.

27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel,

pensations, in distinguishing one creature from another, by his favours: or one sinner from another, by appointing him to peculiar severities of punishment, not exceeding the demerit of his offence: I will now venture, without farther reserve, to say, that in what I have been writing, I had some peculiar reference to God's calling so many of the Gentiles by the grace of his gospel, and his appointing the impenitent Jews to the monuments of wrath. And let me now address myself to the latter, and say, Who gave thee, O Jew, an authority to question and dispute with thy God on this occasion? Yea, is there on the whole any reason for thee, who hast the scriptures of the Old Testament in thine hands, and professest such a regard for them, so much as to be surprised at this, when there are so many hints of it in these Divine oracles? *As* particularly *in Hosea*, where *he* hath spoken of calling Israel Loammi, as disowning them for their wickedness, and *hath also said*, (Hos. i. 10,) "*I will call them my people, who were not my* "*people* before, *and her Beloved, which was not* "for a long time *beloved*[a]; 26 *And it shall* "*come to pass*, [*that*] *in the place where it was* "most expressly *said to them, Ye* [*are*] *not my* "*people, there shall they be called*, not only the "people, but *the sons* and daughters *of the living God*, by special adoption and favour." As he is the living God, he can easily bring it into execution, and the more you reflect on the whole tenor of his word, the more you will be sensible of the propriety with which I apply this passage, whatever its original sense might be, to the purpose in view. 27 I must *also* observe, that *Isaiah crieth concerning Israel* with great earnestness and affection, (Isa. x. 22, 23,) "*Though*

[a] *Call them my people, which were not my people.*] It seems very evident from the connection of these words in Hosea, that they refer to God's purpose of restoring the Jews to the privileges of his people, after they had been a while rejected of him. But it is obvious, they might with great propriety be accommodated to the calling of the Gentiles; and indeed that great event might with some probability be inferred, partly from the temporary rejection of the Jews, of which this text spake, (for it was not to be imagined God would have no people in the world;) and partly, as it was in the nature of things more probable that he should call the heathen, than that he should restore the Jews, when he had cast them off for such ingratitude, as rendered them less worthy of his favour than the most idolatrous nations. Compare Jefferies True Grounds, p. 149.

SECT. XXI.

Rom. IX. 28.

" *the* whole *number of the children of Israel be* " *as the sand of the sea,* [*yet*] only *a remnant* *shall be saved,* and the bulk of the people cut " off. *For the Lord is finishing and cutting* " *short his account in righteousness; for the Lord* " *will make a short account upon the earth*[b]: there " shall be such a consumption of them, that " when accounts come to be balanced, there 29 " will be found but a very small overplus." *As* the same *Isaiah hath formerly said* in a passage very much resembling that which I just now referred to (Isa. i. 9.) " *Except the Lord of hosts* " *had left us a seed, we should have been as So-* " *dom, we should have been made like to Gomor-* " *rah.*" There was then you see but a little remnant, which preserved the whole people from being utterly consumed; so that it is no unexampled thing that the main body of the Jewish nation should fall into a revolt from God, and become the object of his displeasure to the 30 most dreadful degree. *What shall we then say,* in the conclusion of the whole argument? Surely this; *that the Gentiles, who pursued not after righteousness,* who had a little while ago no knowledge or expectation of it, and no desire after it, *have* now, to their own unspeakable surprise, and that of the whole world, *attained to righteousness,* that is, to the profession of a religion whereby they may be justified and saved; *even the righteousness, which is by faith* in the gospel, and consists in humbly committing the soul to Christ in the way that he hath ap-31 pointed. *But* while *Israel* was *pursuing the law of righteousness,* and expecting to obtain righteousness by legal observances, it *hath not attained to* that, which is indeed most properly to be called *the law of righteousness,* that is, to the blessings of that dispensation by which alone righte-32 ousness and life is to be secured. And *wherefore* did they miss those blessings? Because they never heard of the way to Divine favour and acceptance? nay; but *because* [*they did*] *not* [*pursue it*] *by faith,* whereby alone in this

Though the [number] of the chi[ldren of] Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.

28 For he will finish the work, and cut *it* short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.

29 And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabbaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma and been made like unto Gomorrah.

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith:

31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? Because *they sought it*

[b] *Cutting short his account in righteousness.*] Mr. Locke would translate it, *for the Lord, finishing or cutting short his work in righteousness, shall make a short or small remnant in the earth.* This is undoubtedly the sense, but the version is not exact.

Rom. IX. 33.

not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law: for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone;

33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed.

fallen state of our nature it is to be obtained; *but* merely, *as* if it was to be gained *by the works of the law. For they* in fact *stumbled* and fell *at that stone of offence* which lay in their way. *As it is written* in these ever-memorable words, (Isa. viii. 14; chap. xxviii. 16,) "*Behold, I* "*lay in Zion*, that is, I exhibit in my church, "what, though so well fitted to be a foundation "of their happiness, shall in fact prove *a stone* "*of stumbling, and a rock of offence*, that is, an "occasion of sin and ruin to many, through "their own prejudice and perverseness: *and* "*every one who believeth in him shall not be* "*ashamed*, shall not be brought under a neces-"sity of seeking his refuge elsewhere, in help-"less and hasty confusion, to which all they "who slight him shall at last be reduced."

IMPROVEMENT.

HOW can we sinners of the Gentiles ever sufficiently acknowledge the goodness of God to us, in calling us to that full participation of gospel-blessings which we enjoy! That in our native lands, where the name of the true God was so long unknown, we should have the honour of being called his children! O that we may indeed be so, not only by an external profession, but by regenerating grace! May we be of that *remnant*, that *little remnant*, which shall *be saved*, when numbers countless *as the sand of the sea*, which had only the name of God's Israel, shall perish, even in the day when *his work shall be cut short in righteousness!* (Verse 26, 28)

Blessed be God that there is a seed remaining! It is the preservation of the people among which it is found, and had it not been found among us, we had probably long since been made a seat of desolation. May it increase in the rising age, that the pledges of our continued peace and prosperity may be more assured, till our *peace be like a river*, and our *salvation like the waves of the sea!* (29)

It will be so, if we be awakened seriously to inquire how we may be justified before God, and seek that invaluable blessing in the way here pointed out; *if we seek it not as by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ, as the Lord our righteousness.* He hath, in this respect, been to many *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*! May Divine grace teach us the necessity of building upon him, of resting upon him the whole stress of our eternal hopes. Then shall they not sink into disappointment and ruin; then shall we not *flee away ashamed* in that awful day, when *the* (31, 32, 33)

SECT. XXI. *hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters of* that final deluge of Divine wrath *shall overflow, every hiding-place,* but that which God hath prepared for us in his own Son.

SECT. XXII.

The Apostle shews, that God hath offered pardon and salvation on the same equitable, gracious, and easy terms to all; though Israel, by a bigotted attachment to their own law, rejected it. Rom. X. 1—13.

ROMANS X. 1.

SECT. XXII. Rom. X. 1. YOU see, *my brethren,* to what this discourse of mine tends, in which I have been representing faith in Christ, as the only method to prevent our shame and ruin, without the exception of any, whether Jews or Gentiles, who should reject him. I know how unkind and unjust an interpretation may be put on such an assertion, though thus supported by the sacred oracles themselves; and therefore I think it proper to renew the assurances I before gave, that *the* most *affectionate desire of my heart,* in the accomplishment of which I should find the greatest complacency, *and* [*my*] *supplication,* which I am with daily importunity repeating *before God concerning Israel, is for its* present and eternal *salvation* and happiness; which I wish as 2 sincerely as my own. *For I* am ready to *testify* from what I well know *of them* by my own observation and experience, *that they have a* very ardent *zeal for God; but* I lament that it is a zeal *not* regulated *according to knowledge,* or directed into a right channel, in consequence of which it leads them into the most fatal mistakes 3 and excesses. *For they being ignorant of the righteousness of God,* of the purity of his nature, the extent of his law, and the method which in consequence thereof he hath established for the justification of a sinner; *and seeking* with great diligence *to establish* and shoar up, as it were, by the most insufficient props, the ruinous edifice of *their own righteousness,* by the observation of the precepts or expiations of their law[a], *have not submitted* with due humility *to*

ROMANS X. 1.

BRETHREN, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves

[a] Observations of the precepts or expiations of their law.] Many writers, and especially the late Dr. Sherlock, in his book of the knowledge of Christ, have been

unto the righteousness of God.

the righteousness of God exhibited in his Son, nor placed their own attempts of obedience in a due subordination to that.

SECT. XXII.

Rom. X. 4.

4 For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

This is the most fatal error that can be imagined; *for* how insensible soever Israel in general may be of it, it is on the whole most certain, that *Christ* [*is*] *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*,[b] that is, it is the great scope and design of the law to bring men to believe in Christ for righteousness and life, and its ceremonial and moral precepts and constitutions, most harmoniously centre in this. *For Moses* most exactly *describeth the* 5 only way of *righteousness which is* attainable *by the law*, [*when he saith*] again and again, (Lev. xviii. 5. compared with Deut. xxvii. 26.) *The man who doth them shall live* in and *by them*;[c] that is, the man who perfectly observes these precepts in every particular, and in every punctilio, he, and he alone, if such a person there be, may claim life and salvation by them. Now this is a way of justification, which, when the law has once been broken, becomes absolutely impossible to the transgressor. *But the righ-* 6 *teousness which is by faith, speaketh* a very different language, and may be considered as expressing itself *thus*, (if I may be allowed to borrow the words of the great Jewish legislator, when representing the plainness and perspicuity of his law; Deut. xxx. 11—14.) "*Say* "*not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into hea-* "*ven, that is*, as I may in this view accommo-

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to

much mistaken in the representation they have made of the Pharisaical righteousness, as if it consisted merely in substituting ceremonial observances instead of moral duties. The Pharisees certainly inculcated the external duties of morality, how much soever they might themselves fail in observing them, or rest merely in outward acts; but they trusted in legal expiations to procure the pardon of those evils which might happen; and the composition of these, if I may be allowed the expression, constituted the righteousness which they went about *στησαι, to establish, or prop up*, decrepit as it was.

[b] *The end of the law.*] The scope of it, as Elsner shews on this place, that τελος signifies; he paraphrases the words, *no one can fulfil the law, till he believe in* Christ. But that, how true soever, (compare chap. viii. 2—4.) seems not the chief view of the apostle here.

[c] *The man that doth them shall live by them.*] The Sinai covenant made no express provision for the pardon of any sin deliberately and wickedly committed against it; and so was indeed a covenant of works: though the dispensation of Moses contained some farther intimation of the covenant of grace, which was made with Abraham, and was quite a distinct thing from the law. And the apostle builds so much on these thoughts here, and elsewhere, that it will be of importance to render them familiar to the mind, and to trace the evidence and illustration of them in the Mosaic writings

SECT. XXII.

Rom. X. 7.

" date the passage, *to conduct Christ down with* " *him* [*from thence*,] to teach and instruct us, " or to atone for our offences; *or, Who shall* " *descend into the deep* abyss, *that is, to bring* " *Christ again from* his abode *among the dead*, " in the bowels of the earth." No; blessed be God, Christ hath already descended from heaven to bring down the gospel, and he hath in a triumphant manner arisen from the dead to set an everlasting seal to its Divine authority; so that there is no more room to puzzle ourselves about difficulties, or to wish for a power of doing what to human skill or strength 8 is impossible. *But what saith he* afterwards? even these words, so remarkably applicable to the subject before us; " *The word is nigh to* " *thee*, [*even*] *in thy mouth, and in thine heart;* " easy to be understood, easy to be remem" bered; and if thine heart be rightly disposed, " easy to be practised too." And *that is* eminently the case with relation to *the word of* 9 Christian *faith which we preach: For* God hath given a very plain and intelligible revelation in his gospel; and the substance of it is this, That *if thou* dost courageously *confess with thy mouth*, that *Jesus* is *the Lord, and* at the same time *believe in thy heart*, with a vital and influential faith, *that God hath raised him from the dead*, in proof of his divine mission; *thou shalt* assuredly *be saved* whoever thou art, and how heinous and aggravated soever thy past 10 sins may have been. *For* it is *with the heart* that a *man believeth to righteousness*, or so as to obtain justification, nor can any thing but a cordial assent secure that; *and with the mouth confession is made to salvation*, and that public profession of Christianity is maintained, without which a secret conviction of its truth would only condemn. Let therefore the heart and the tongue do their respective parts on this occasion, and your salvation and happiness will be secure; though your obedience to the law of God may have been very defective, and you could have no claim to reward, or for-11 giveness from thence. *For the scripture* in reference to Christ, as in the fore-cited text, (Isa. xxviii. 16.) *saith*, " *Every one that be-* " *lieveth in him shall not be* in danger of being

bring Christ down *from above*;)

7 Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach,

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

" *ashamed*, and put to confusion, in any imagi- " nable circumstance:" Every one without distinction, *for*, you see, *there is no difference between Jew and Greek. For the same Lord of all*, the Creator, Governor, Preserver, and Benefactor of the whole human species, *displays his riches*, and magnifies his bounty, *to all that call upon him*, imparting to them all the same blessings of his providence and grace. 13 *For whosoever shall invoke the name of the Lord shall be saved*,[d] as the prophet Joel testifies, (Joel ii. 32.) when he had been speaking of those great events which have in part been so wonderfully accomplished in the effusion of the Spirit, and shall be farther fulfilled in those scenes of Providence which are shortly to open on the Jewish nation.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1 LET our hearts, after the example of St. Paul here before us, be overflowing with love and compassion to our brethren, and let us be earnestly interceding with God for their salvation. 2 Where we see a zeal for God, let us pay all due regard to it, and compassionate that ignorance which may sometimes be mingled with it; especially if it effect so important an article as that 3 of our becoming righteous before God by a better righteousness than our own. Let us pray that God would teach us, and would enable us, according to our respective situations, in a proper 4 manner to teach others, that Christ is indeed the end of the law, of all the laws which God ever gave to fallen man, for righteousness; all were intended to convince men of their need of coming to him, that righteousness and life may be obtained.

Great reason have we to adore the Divine goodness, and to congratulate ourselves, and one another, upon our great happiness in this respect, that God hath given us a revelation, so obvious and intelligible in all the grand points of it. We have in-6, 7 deed no necessity, no temptation to say, *Who shall go up into heaven? or, Who shall descend into the deep?* or, Who, like the industrious, but bewildered, sages of antiquity, shall cross the seas, to bring that knowledge from distant countries, which is wanting in our own? The *word is nigh to us:* It is indeed *in our mouth:* O that it may be *in our heart* too! We know a descend-8 ing, a risen Redeemer. He still visits us in his gospel, still

[d] *Invoke the name of the Lord*, &c.] Bishop Pearson argues at large from hence, that if Christ be not here called Jehovah, the apostle's argument is quite inconclusive. Pearson on the Creed, p. 149.

SECT. XXII. Verse 9, 10

preaches in our assemblies, and stretches out a gentle and compassionate hand, to lead us in the way to happiness. May our profession of faith in him be cordial; and then it will be open and courageous, whatever sacrifices we may be called to make. *Believing on him, we shall not be ashamed; calling on his name, we shall be saved:* though we can meet with nothing but despair 5 from a dispensation, that saith, *The man who* perfectly *doth* these precepts, *shall live by them.*

SECT. XXIII.

The Apostle pursues the view given in the last section, and shews, that the gospel had been diffused widely through the world: though according to other prophecies, which he here mentions from Moses, and Isaiah, the Jews had rejected it, while the Gentiles embraced it. Rom. X. 14, *to the end.*

ROMANS X. 14.

SECT. XXIII. Rom. X. 14.

FROM the promise of salvation to them that shall call on the name of the Lord, I have just been inferring, (ver. 12, 13.) that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, as to the possibility of obtaining salvation from God. And from hence we may farther infer what is very sufficient to justify me and my brethren, in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, though we are the objects of so much reproach and persecution on that account. Let us *therefore* attend to the inference. For *how shall they call on him on whom they have not believed*, as worthy to be invoked with Divine honours and adoration? *and how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear* of him *without a preacher* to carry these important tidings which the light of nature could never be able to discover? *And*, as for the ministers 15 of the gospel, *how should they preach, except they be sent* expressly for that purpose? For, as we were originally Jews, our own prejudices on this head were so strong, that we should never have thought of carrying the gospel to the Gentiles, if God had not particularly charged us to do it. But blessed be God, that the charge has been given, and the embassy sent; and most welcome should it be to all that receive it, *as it*

ROMANS X. 14.

HOW then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is

SECT. XXIII.

Rom. X. 15

written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

is written and described in that lively prophecy,[a] (Isa. lii. 7, 8.) "*O how beautiful are the feet,* "the very footsteps, *of those who bring the good* "*tidings of peace, who bring the good tidings* "*of* those various *good things* which God hath "now been pleased to bestow on his church. "It is pleasant to see and hear the messengers, "pleasant to view the very tract of ground over "which they have passed on the mountains "which surround Jerusalem.[b]"

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

16 *But*, alas, *all have not obeyed the gospel*, glorious as its tidings are, nor given it that cordial reception which its happy contents might well have demanded. And they who are well acquainted with the oracles of the Old Testament, and study them impartially, will not be surprised at it. *For Isaiah saith*, in that very context, which contains so many illustrious testimonies to the cause in which we are engaged, (Isa. liii. 1,) "*Lord, who hath believed our report*, and to "whom is the arm of the Lord revealed, and "made bare?"

17 So then, faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

17 *Faith indeed* [*cometh*] *by hearing, and hearing* in the case now before us *by the word*, the express command *of God*, to make the declaration.[c] It is therefore our duty to deliver the message, wheresoever we come, whether to Jews or Gentiles, in humble hope, that some will believe: though we have so much reason to fear that many will reject it.

18 But I say, Have

18 This is our duty, *but* a duty which we cannot

[a] In that lively prophecy.] Most commentators think, that the lii. chapter of Isaiah is to be explained as a prophecy of the return of the Jews from Babylon, and that the text here quoted refers to the joyful welcome that should be given to the messengers who brought the first tidings of Cyrus's decree for their dismission. And if it were so, the apostle might very justly infer from thence the superior joy with which the messengers of the gospel should be received. But I think, a great deal may be said to shew it probable, that the context in question has in its original sense a farther reference. Compare Isa. li. 4—6. But not judging it necessary in the paraphrase, to build upon it as an argument, I shall not by any means discuss the matter here.

[b] The very footsteps.] L'Enfant thinks the *feet* are put for the *man*. Compare Gen. xxv. 30, in the original. But I think the turn given in the paraphrase, illustrates it much better. Bos observes, that in Sophocles, the hands and feet of those who come upon a kind design, are represented as beautiful to those who received benefit by their arrival.

[c] *Faith* [*indeed*] *cometh.*] Mr. L'Enfant would transpose the 16th and 17th verses; and it is certain, as any one may easily perceive, that the connection of all from the 15th to the 18th, would in that view be clearer; but as no copies warrant it, I think it is by no means to be presumed upon. I have therefore translated αρα, which is often a sort of an expletive, by the word *indeed*, which throws this verse into some kind of connection with the next, and if referred to αλλα there, will I hope be thought agreeable enough to the Greek idiom.

SECT. XXIII.

Rom. X. 18

perform without some discouragements; yet *I may* confidently *say*, it hath in the main been practised; and I may appeal to what you at Rome knew of the matter, in consequence of your correspondence with all parts of the empire. *Have they not heard* of the gospel all abroad, so that I may take up the words of David, (Psal. xix. 4,) when describing the course of the celestial luminaries, and apply them to the zeal, and in some measure to the success, with which the missionaries of this holy religion have exerted themselves, assisted by the blessed Spirit of God, and animated by the hope of that glorious immortality to which they have taught others to aspire. Of them may I say, that "*verily their* "*voice is gone out through all the earth, and* "*their words to the end of the world:*" many distant nations have already heard these glad tidings which God will at length render universal. (Col. i. 6, 23.)

18 they not heard? Yes verily their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

19 *But I* may farther *say, Hath not Israel known*, or had an opportunity not only of knowing that the gospel should be preached, but that it should be carried to the Gentiles too? *For first Moses saith*, in that celebrated song of his, which the children in all generations were to learn, (Deut. xxxii. 21,) "*I will raise your jealousy by [those* "*who were] not a nation, [and] your anger with* "*a foolish people;*" which may well be understood as ultimately referring to this great

20 scheme. *And Isaiah hath the boldness to say*, in a context, where so many things evidently refer to the gospel. (Isa. lxv. 1, 2,) "*I was* "*found of them that sought me not; I was made* "*manifest to them that inquired not for me,* " nor discovered any concern to be informed

21 " of my nature, or my will;" *Whereas*, invidious as he knew it would be to a nation so impatient of rebuke, *with relation to Israel he saith*, in the very next verse, "*All the day long* "*have I stretched out mine hands*, in the most " importunate and affectionate addresses, *to a* "*disobedient and gainsaying people*, who are " continually objecting and cavilling; whom no " persuasion can win to regard their own hap- " piness, so as to be willing to admit the evi- " dence of truth, and the counsels of wisdom."

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are no people, and* by a foolish nation I will anger you.

20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

SECT. XXIII.

It appears then on the whole, that since the prophets so plainly foretold that the Gentiles should be called and the Jews rejected, it is no way unbecoming my character, as a messenger from God, and a friend to the Jewish nation, to assert the same, and to act upon it.

Rom. X. 21.

IMPROVEMENT.

BLESSED be God for the preaching of the gospel, so absolutely necessary to that faith without which we can have no well-grounded hope of salvation. Blessed be God therefore for the mission of his ministers, and for his abundant goodness in sending them to us sinners of the Gentiles. Let us give them a respectful and attentive hearing, and say, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that preach salvation, that publish peace!* And let us take great care, that we do not only speak respectfully of their doctrine, but that we comply with the purposes of their embassy.

Verse 14, 15

It is matter of continual joy to reflect, not only that God hath afforded to all men such means of attaining Divine knowledge, by the intimations of it which he hath given in the constitutions of the heavenly bodies, and in the whole frame of visible nature; but also, that he hath sent the express messages of grace to so many millions, in the extensive publication of his gospel. Let us rejoice in the spread it hath already had, and let us earnestly and daily pray, that the voice of those Divine messengers, that proclaim it, may *go forth unto all the earth, and their words reach in a* literal sense *to the* remotest *ends of our* habitable *world.* Let us pray, that wherever the word of God hath a free course, it may be more abundantly glorified; and that its ministers may not have so much reason to say, *Who hath believed our report?* and to complain of *stretching out their hands all the day long to a disobedient and gain-saying people.* Exert, O Lord God, thine almighty arm, make it bare in the sight of all the nations! Shed abroad thy saving influences on the hearts of multitudes, that they may believe, and turn unto the Lord! May the great Saviour of his *Israel be found of those that seek him not,* and by the surprising condescensions of his grace may he manifest himself to those that do not inquire after him! And may his ancient people not only be provoked to anger, but awakened to emulation too; and put in their claim for those blessings which God has by his Son vouchsafed to offer to all the Gentiles!

18

16, 21

20

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SECT. XXIV.

The Apostle shews, that though the rejection of Israel be, for the present, general, according to their own prophecies, and attended with astonishing blindness and obstinacy, yet it is not total; there being still a number of happy believers among them. Rom. XI. 1—10.

ROMANS XI. 1.

SECT. XXIV. Rom. XI. 1.

WE have seen, my brethren, how the perverseness of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, hath been foretold; but *do I say then, that God hath* entirely *rejected his* whole *people,* so as to have mercy on none of them? *God forbid!* I should then pronounce a sentence of reprobation upon myself; *for I also am an Israelite,* as it is well known I am *of the seed of Abraham,* and can trace my genealogy, and shew particularly, that I am [*of*] *the tribe of* 2 *Benjamin.* No, blessed be his name, *God hath not rejected* those of *his people whom he foreknew;* but hath still, as in the most degenerate ages, a seed, whom he hath chosen to faith and salvation. *Know you not what the scripture saith* to this purpose, *in the* story of *Elijah?* (Compare 1 Kings xix. 14,) *when he pleads* 3 *with God against Israel, saying, "Lord, they* "*have* cruelly *slain* all *thy* faithful *prophets,* "*and they have digged up* the very foundations "of *thine altars*[a]; *and I am left alone,* after "the slaughter of all thine other servants: *and* "*they seek my life* too, and send murderers in "pursuit of me from place to place, that there "may not be one worshipper of Jehovah left 4 "in their whole land." *But* recollect, *what says the Divine oracle to him,* in answer to this doleful complaint? "*I have reserved unto my-*" "*self,* by my grace and providence, no less than "*seven thousand men, who have not bowed the* "*knee before* the image of *Baal,* nor complied

ROMANS XI. 1.

I SAY then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets and digged down thine altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the *image* of Baal.

[a] *Digged up thine altars.*] It seems from hence, that, though according to the law there was only one altar for sacrifice, and that in the place where God had fixed his peculiar residence; yet, by some special dispensation, pious persons in the ten tribes built altars elsewhere. It is well known, at least, that Samuel, and Elijah had done it, and perhaps, they were either kept up, or others raised on the same spots of ground.

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

"with any of these idolatrous rites which are "established by these iniquitous laws." *And so also in the present time,* bad as this generation of Israelites is, and sure they were never worse, yet *there is a remnant,* who continues faithful to God, *according to the* free *election of* his *grace,* whereby God hath reserved them to himself, and made them to differ from others.[b]

6 And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

6 *And* by the way, I cannot forbear observing and intreating you to reflect, that *if it be,* as I have said, according to the election *of grace, then [it is] no more* as some have maintained *of works,* whether of the Mosaic, or any other law; *else grace is no longer grace,*[c] if the glory of our acceptance with God is not on the whole to be ascribed to that. *But* on the other side, *if [it be] of works, then it is no more of grace; else work is no longer work.* There is something so absolutely inconsistent between being saved by grace, and by works, that if you lay down either, you do of necessity exclude the other from being the cause of it.

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded:

7 *But* to return from this short digression, *what then* do we conclude? What, but this, that *Israel hath not obtained that* justification and righteousness *which it has sought,* nor retained these particular privileges of the church of God which they pretend entirely to engross: *but the election,* the chosen remnant, *hath obtained it,* having been by Divine grace engaged to embrace the gospel; *whereas the rest were blinded* by their own fatal prejudices, to which God hath in righteous judgment, given them up.

8 According as it is written, God hath

8 *According as it is written,* (Isa. xxix. 10. Com-

[b] *The election of grace.*] Some explain this of *their having chosen grace,* that is, the gospel; but that turn is very unnatural, and neither suits the phrase nor the connection with the former clause, or with the next verse, in which the apostle comments on his own words.

[c] *Else grace is no longer grace,* &c.] Some interpret this, "The gospel would "not deserve the name of *grace,* if the "observation of the Mosaic law were to "be taken in as a part of the terms of "our acceptance with God." But this would have been a strange position. Who, that in any degree knew the terrors of God's anger, would not most gladly have accepted of the full pardon the gospel offers, on much more rigorous terms than obedience to the Mosaic ritual? The meaning rather seems to be, "what is "given to works is the payment of a "debt, whereas the notion of grace implies an unmerited favour; so that the "same benefit cannot, at the same time, "be derived from both." This seems to be a reflection on the riches of Divine grace, which the apostle makes by the way, and which well agrees with the fulness of his heart on this subject.

SECT. XXIV.

Rom. XI. 8.

pare Deut. xxix. 4; and Isa. vi. 10,) *God hath given them a spirit of slumber; eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear.* He threatened, you see, to punish their perverseness, when it should come to a certain degree, by abandoning them to increasing stupidity and obstinacy, and he hath done it even *unto this day:* for their blindness continues notwithstanding all the extraordinary things which have been done, even in our own age of wonders, for 9 their conviction. *And* this is agreeable to what *David hath said*, in that prophetical imprecation which is applicable to them, as well as to Judas, (Psal. lxix. 22, 23; compare Acts i. 20,) *Let* all the blessings of *their* most plentiful *table become a snare* to them, *and* that which should, according to its original use and intention, have been for their welfare, *a trap.* Thus the gospel which should have been the means of their salvation, is now become an instrument of ruin and destruction to them, *and an occasion of stumbling* in the most fatal manner. *And* it must be acknowledged to be *a* just *recompense* for their wickedness; that the best of blessings should thus be turned into a curse *to them* that so ungratefully rejected and despised it. And in 10 them the following words are also fulfilled, *Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and keep their back continually bent down*, under a perpetual weight of sorrows, which they may not be able to support, and which may be a just punishment upon them for having rejected so easy a yoke. (Compare Lev. xxvi. 13.)

given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day.

9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them.

10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 3, 4 LET us learn from the answer of God to Elijah, when he thought himself left alone, and knew nothing of the seven thousand which God had reserved; to encourage ourselves in a secret hope, that there may be much more goodness in the world than we are particularly aware of. The numbers of those, that constitute the invisible church, are unknown to us, but they are known to God. They are all registered in the book of his remembrance, as they are all reserved unto himself by his grace; nor shall *his people whom he hath foreknown be cast away.* May 2 we be of that blessed number; and may the degeneracy, which we see so prevalent around us, animate us to a holy zeal, to

hold fast our own integrity: yea, to seize the occasion of approving it in a more acceptable manner, from a circumstance, in every other view, greatly to be lamented. SECT. XXIV.

Let us often reflect upon this great and important truth so frequently inculcated upon us in the word of God, that it is to his grace, and not to any works of our own, that we are to ascribe our acceptance with him. And let the ministers of Christ be ready, after the example of the apostle, sometimes to turn, as it were out of the way, to dwell a little on a thought, at once so humbling and so reviving. Verse 6

We see the miserable circumstances of God's ancient *Israel*, given up to a *spirit of slumber*, *to blind eyes*, and *to deaf ears*. O let us take heed, that we do not imitate their obstinacy and folly; lest God make our own wickedness our destruction; lest he *send a curse upon us, and curse our blessings, so that our table should become a snare to us*, our temporal enjoyments, or our spiritual privileges. Lord let us often say, *Give us any plague, rather than the plague of the heart;* and *bow down our backs* under any load of affliction, rather than that which shall at last crush those who have refused to accept of thy gospel, and to take upon their shoulders the light burden which a gracious Saviour would lay upon them. 7, 8 9 10

SECT. XXV.

The Apostle shews in this and the next section that the rejection of Israel is not final; but that the time shall come, when, to the unspeakable joy of the Christian world, the Jewish nation shall be brought into the church of Christ. Rom. XI. 11—24.

ROMANS XI. 11.

I SAY then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

ROMANS XI. 11.

SECT. XXV. Rom. XI. 11

I HAVE asserted above, the rejection of the Jewish nation in general; yet I have observed, that it is not total, so that none of them should remain objects of mercy. And do I assert it to be final? *Do I then say, they have* so *stumbled*, as *that*, as a nation, *they should fall* into irrecoverable ruin, and never more be owned by God, as his people? *God forbid! but* I assert, that *by this fall of theirs, salvation* [*is*] at the present [*come*] *to the Gentiles;* the future consequence of which shall be *to provoke them to* a holy *emulation* of sharing the blessings and benefits to be expected from their own Messiah, when they shall see so many heathen nations enjoy them.

12 Now if the fall

12 *But* these should be no unwelcome tidings to you Gentiles: for *if their fall* [*be*] by accident

SECT. XXV.

Rom. XI. 12

the riches of the world, and their diminution the riches of the Gentiles, by scattering the preachers of the gospel among them, by proving our veracity and integrity, and in some measure exciting compassion too; though their rejecting us, in itself considered, might rather appear as an argument against it; *how much more* shall the bringing in *their* whole *fulness*, that is, the whole body of the Jewish nation, be a means of propagating the gospel much farther, and recovering multitudes, by whom it hath been rejected, from their scepticism and infidelity, when so great an event appears in accomplishment of 13 its known predictions.[a] *For I now speak to you Gentiles*, and I do it with tenderness and respect, *as I am*, by a special designation of Providence, *the apostle of the Gentiles; I* therein *extol my office*, and esteem it the most signal 14 honour of my life to be employed in it. And while I thus address you, it is also with a desire *that I may*, if possible, *excite to emulation* [*them who are*] *my* brethren according to the *flesh, and* who are dear to me as the members of my own body; that, if I may not prevail for the recovery of their nation in general, I *may* at least *save some of them ;* while I speak of these kind purposes, which I assuredly know God will accomplish towards the whole Jewish people in his appointed time. And this thought gives new spirit to my address to you, as I hope it may not only

of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles: how much more their fulness?

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them.

[a] Accomplishment of its known predictions.] So many of the prophecies of the Old Testament, do evidently refer to the reduction of the Jews into their own land, as the people of the Messiah, that I can by no means doubt of the certainty of that event. Compare Isa. xxvii. 12, 13; Ezek. xi, 17—21; chap. xx. 34—44; chap. xxxiv. 13, 14; chap. xxxv. 25—29; chap. xxxvi. 24—28; chap. xxxvii. 21—28; Amos ix. 14, 15; Obad. ver. 17; Mic. vii. 14, 15; Zech. xiv. 10, 11. And the wonderful preservation of them as a distinct people, thus far, not only leaves a possibility of this great event, but encourages the hope of it. When it shall be accomplished, it will be so unparalleled, as necessarily to excite a general attention, and to fix upon men's minds, such an almost irresistible demonstration both of the Old and New Testament revelation as will probably captivate the minds of many thousands of deists, in countries professedly Christian, (of which, under such corrupt establishments as generally prevail, there will of course be increasing multitudes;) nor will this only captivate their understanding, but will have the greatest tendency to awaken a sense of true religion in their hearts; and this will be a means of propagating the gospel with an amazing velocity in Pagan and Mahometan countries; which probably had been evangelized long ago, had genuine Christianity prevailed in those who have made a profession, and God knows, for the most part, a very scandalous profession, of its forms.—The 15th verse has so natural a connection with the 12th, that Elsner includes the 13th and 14th in a parenthesis.

tend to your edification and salvation, but also to theirs.[b]

15 For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world; what *shall* the receiving *of them be*, but life from the dead?

In like manner, when I wish their recovery, it is not for their sakes alone; but also with respect to those happy consequences which I know it will have upon the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles. *For* as I hinted above, *if their rejection*, [*were*] *the reconciliation of* so great a part of *the* heathen *world* to God, as it was the means of sending the gospel of peace among them; *what* [*will*] *the reception* [*of them be*,] *but life from the dead?* What joy will it necessarily give, and what a general spread of the gospel will it naturally produce?

16 For if the first-fruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches.

16 And this blessed event we may assuredly expect: *for if the first-fruits* [*be*] *holy, so* [*is*] *the lump.* The consecration of them was looked upon as in effect the consecration of all. And so would I look upon the conversion of some few of the Jewish nation, as an earnest of the conversion of all the rest. *And* so much the rather, when I consider, how eminently dear to God those pious patriarchs were from whom they have descended: for *if the root* [*be*] *holy, the branches* [*are likewise*] *so*, and will surely at length be regarded as such.

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree;

17 And this, though some of them be at present in so melancholy a state; *for if some of the branches were broken off, and thou*, O Gentile, *being*, as it were a scion of *a wild olive, were graffed in among them* that remained,[c] *and art with them partaker of*, and nourished by, *the root and fatness of the good olive;* being not only a graft upon another stock, but a meaner graft on a stock originally noble and more excellent;

18 Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the

18 *Boast not thyself* presumptuously and ungratefully *against the* natural *branches; and if thou boastest*, [*remember*] to thy humiliation, [*that*] *thou bearest not the*

[b] Also to theirs.] Perhaps we can no where find an instance of a more popular and affectionate turn than this, in which the apostle seems to find a reason for his zeal to convert the Gentiles in his love to his own countrymen the Jews.

[c] *Wild olive graffed in among them.*] It is very improper to object, that it is unnatural to suppose an *ignoble branch graffed on a rich stock;* for it was not necessary that the simile taken from inoculation should hold in all its particulars; and the engagement to humility arises in a considerable degree from the circumstances objected against. Had the scion been nobler than the stock, its dependence on it for life and nourishment, would render it unfit that it should boast against it; how much more, when the case was the reverse of what in human usage is practised, and the wild olive is ingrafted on the good.

SECT. XXV.

Rom. XI. 19.

root, but the root thee. Thou hast received many benefits from Abraham's seed, and the covenant made with him, but they have received none from thee. *Wilt thou therefore* object, and *say,* "*The* natural *branches were broken off,* "*that I might be graffed in;* and therefore we "may glory over them as they once did over 20 "us;" *Well,* take this thought at least along with thee, *they were broken off for their infidelity, and thou* hitherto *standest* in their place *through faith.* Therefore *be not high-minded* and arrogant, *but fear,*[d] lest thou by thy sins forfeit the privileges to which thou art so won-21 derfully raised. *For if God spared not the branches, which were according to nature, neither will he by any means spare thee,* if thine unbelief make thee, after all thy peculiar obligations, as bad, and in that respect, even worse than they.
22 *Behold therefore,* on the whole, a remarkable display of *the* intermingled *goodness and severity of God,* and endeavour to improve both well! *Towards them that fell,* thou *indeed* seest a memorable instance of his *severity; but to thee,* a display of gentleness and *goodness, if thou* wilt be careful to *continue in* [*his*] *goodness,* and endeavour gratefully and dutifully to improve it; *else thou also shalt be cut off,* for the blessed God will not bear always to be in-23 sulted with the petulancy of sinners. *And* I would have you farther to consider as a motive to think of the Jews with respect, rather than contempt, that *they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, shall be graffed on again,* and restored to their former privileges. *For* it is certain, *God is able again to ingraff them:* hopeless as their state may seem both with respect to their obstinacy and their misery, his powerful access to their mind can subdue their prejudices against the gospel, as thou mayest easily argue 24 from what thou hast thyself experienced. *For if thou wert,* as I may properly enough express it, *cut off from the olive-tree which was naturally wild, and contrary to* the course and process

root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in.

20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear.

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness, and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness. Otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again.

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary

[d] *Be not high-minded,* &c.] Archbishop Tillotson well observes, that this caution ill suits the claim to infallibility, which the modern church of Rome so arrogantly makes, amidst all the absurdities with which her doctrine and her ritual are loaded.

to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these which be the natural *branches*, be graffed into their own olive-tree?

SECT XXV. Rom. XI. 24.

of *nature, were graffed on the good olive-tree;* if thou wert admitted into covenant with God, though descended from parents that were strangers and enemies, *how much more shall they who are the natural* [*branches,*] to whom the promises do originally belong, *be graffed on their own olive?* God will not seem to do so wonderful a thing, in restoring them to what might seem the privilege of their birth-right and descent, and saving the seed of Abraham his friend; as he hath done, in calling you sinners of the Gentiles, to participate the blessings of which you had not the least notion, and to which you cannot be supposed to have had any imaginable claim.

IMPROVEMENT.

Let us set ourselves seriously to pause upon the conduct of God towards the Jews and Gentiles in that part of it which the apostle here describes, and rejoice with trembling in it. Let us reflect on the *Divine severity to them*, and *the Divine goodness to us.* What immense goodness! That we should be taken from that wretched condition in which we were utterly ignorant of the great Author and end of our being, of the nature of true happiness, and the way of obtaining it; that we and our offspring might be *graffed on the good stock*, be called to the most important of those privileges and hopes with which the seed of Abraham were honoured and enriched. We *partake of the fatness of the good olive;* may our fruit abound to the honour of God, to the benefit of mankind!

Verse 22, 24, 17

Let us cherish the most benevolent and tender disposition towards the house of Israel, to whose spiritual privileges we are raised; and let us earnestly pray that they may be *awakened to emulation;* especially as their *fulness is to be the riches of the Gentiles*, and *the receiving them again, as life from the dead* to the languishing and decaying church.

11

In the mean time, as the gospel comes to us in so awful a manner, vindicated from the contempt of former despisers, let us solemnly charge upon our souls this lesson of holy caution, these salutary words, (O that they may be continually present to our thoughts!) *Be not high-minded, but fear;* whatever our privileges whatever our experiences are, whatever our confidence may be, let us dwell upon the thought; for there is no Christian upon earth that hath not reason to fear, in proportion to the degree in which he feels his thoughts towering on high, and grows into any conceit of himself. Daily let us recollect what we were in

20

SECT. XXV. our natural estate; and what with all our improvements and attainments, we should immediately be, if God should forsake us.

Verse 22 Let us pray therefore that we may *continue in God's goodness;* and whoever may appear to fall from it, let us not glory; but rather mourn over them, and pray for their recovery and salvation to that God who is able to recover from the most obstinate 18 infidelity and impenitence, and to graff not only on foreign branches, but what may seem yet more wonderful, those that have appeared more than twice dead.

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The Apostle farther illustrates the future conversion of the Jews to the gospel; and concludes the argument with observing, that in the mean time, their obstinacy is over-ruled to such happy purposes, as make the whole scene a most glorious display of the unsearchable wisdom of God. Rom. XI. 25, *to the end.*

ROMANS XI. 25.

SECT. XXVI. Rom. XI. 25 AND now, my *brethren*, upon the whole, I will conclude what I have to say upon this interesting and affecting subject, which I have indeed enlarged upon pretty copiously; for it lies with great weight upon my heart. And therefore *I would not have you to be ignorant of this* material circumstance relating to the great *mystery* in the dispensation before us, which, on the first views of it, may appear very unaccountable; *lest you should have too high an opinion of yourselves*, when you see the Jews rejected for their fatal error. I would not, I say, have you ignorant of this, *that* the lamentable *blindness* and infatuation we have been speaking of, *is in part happened unto Israel*, and has spread itself over by far the greatest part of the Jewish people, not that they may utterly perish, and be for ever cut off; but that they may continue in this humble and rejected state, *till* a certain period arrive, when *the fulness of the Gentiles*, the appointed harvest of them, *shall be brought in,*[a]

ROMANS XI. 25.

FOR I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits;) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

[a] *Till the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, &c.*] It is well remarked by my late learned, pious, and candid friend, Dr. William Harris, that as this epistle was written about the year 57, that is, long after the most remarkable conversion of the Jews, by the first preaching of the apostles, and after Paul had been about 30 years engaged in his work, it appears, that the prophecies relating to the calling of the Jews were not accomplished then, and consequently are not yet accomplish-

SECT. XXVI.

Rom. XI. 26.

26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election; *they are* beloved for the fathers sakes.

and incorporated with those already associated to the church of Christ. *And so*, when this happy season marked out in the divine decrees, though to us unknown, *shall* be come, that blessed event shall make way for it, and *all* the seed of *Israel* shall, by a general conversion, *be saved* from its dispersion and misery, and fixed in a state of covenant favour and acceptance with God again, *As it is written*, (Isa. lix. 20.) *a Deliverer shall come out of Sion, and he shall turn away* the punishment of their former *impiety from Jacob*, when he hath brought them to true repentance.[b] As it is added, *And this* 27 [*is*] *my covenant* which I shall make *with them when I shall take away their sins*, that is, when their sins as a nation are remitted, it shall be to bring them again into covenant with myself. And thus, on the whole, *with respect to the gos-* 28 *pel*, [*they are*] indeed regarded as *enemies for your sakes;* that is, for their obstinate rejecting the gospel, God hath rejected them, in favour of you, and that he might receive you into his church as in their stead:[c] *but as for the election*, that remnant of them which God hath graciously chosen to be subdued by the grace of the gospel, [*they are*] *beloved for their fathers sakes.* God's gracious regard to the memory of

ed. Harris's Practical Discourses on the Messiah, p. 91. Dr. Whitby very justly observes that there is a *double harvest* of the Gentiles, spoken of by Paul, in this chapter; the first, called *their riches*, verse 12, as consisting in the preaching the gospel to all nations, whereby indeed they were happily enriched with Divine knowledge and grace; the second, *the bringing in their fulness*, which expresses a more glorious conversion of many to the true faith of Christians, in the latter age of the world, which is to be occasioned by the conversion of the Jews. Whitby in Loc. This answers Orobio's objection, (Limb. Collat. p. 94.) that Paul's account is contrary to the prophecies of the Old Testament, which represent the recovery of the Gentile nations, as consequent on the redemption of Israel.

[b] *As it is written*, Isa. lix. 20, &c.] This text, as it stands in the Hebrew, seems different from the sense in which it is here quoted. *A deliverer shall come—to those that turn from iniquity.* But if Christ be here foretold as *a Deliverer to the Jews*, it is all that the apostle's purpose requires. Yet it is observable the LXX agrees better with the words of the quotation, as it possibly might with the original reading: and it is certain, that the general tenor of God's covenant with Israel gave no hope of deliverance after rejection and chastisement, but in a way of repentance and reformation. Compare Lev. xxvi. 39—45; Deut. xxx. 1—10.

[c] *Enemies for your sakes.*] The most natural sense of these words, were they considered alone, might seem, that the calling the Gentiles prejudiced the Jews against the gospel; but as they generally rejected it before the Gentiles were called, I, on the whole, prefer the sense given, in the paraphrase. The different sense of δια here supposed, may seem a strong objection against it; but if δια be rendered *with a regard to*, it may be applicable to both.

SECT. XXVI.

Rom. XI. 28.

their pious ancestors, engages him to take care that some of their seed shall always continue in covenant with him, till at length he recover them as a nation, and astonish the world with their unequalled glory and felicity. 29 And this shall most assuredly be, *for the gifts and calling of God* [*are*] *not to be repented of:*[d] he doth not resume the gifts he hath once bestowed, nor retract the calls he hath once given, but will maintain a remembrance of them, and act in perfect harmony with them, in all his dispensations: according to that wise plan which he hath laid in his eternal counsels, and from which no unforeseen contingency can ever cause him to vary.

29 For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

30 *As then ye* Gentiles *were once*, and for a long time, *disobedient to God*, and buried in ignorance and superstition, *but now have obtained mercy by means of their disobedience;* God having taken you to be his people instead of the 31 Jews; *So they also, having been disobedient* to the gospel, and the more prejudiced against it *on occasion of your* admittance to such distinguishing *mercy*, yet shall not be utterly and finally ruined, but, *shall also* to the glory of Divine grace at length, themselves, *obtain* the 32 *mercy* they have envied you. And thus the divine goodness is illustrated, even by that which might seem most contrary to it: *for* it appears, that *God hath*, for a certain time, *shut up all under* obstinacy and *disobedience*,[e] suffering each in their turn to revolt, under different degrees of light, *that he might* in a more remarkable manner *have mercy on all*, and glorify the riches

30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:

31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.

32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

[d] *Not to be repented of.*] Elsner has produced many passages from approved Greek classics, in which the word ἀμεταμέλητος, is used exactly in this sense; and has collected, in his curious note on this verse, many testimonies of Pagan authors relating to the Divine perfections, which might have taught some Christian divines to speak more honourably of them than they do in some of their writings.

[e] *Shut up all under disobedience, &c.*] It is of great importance to observe, that this refers to different periods. First, God suffered the Gentiles, in the early ages of the world, to revolt, and then took the Abrahamic family as a peculiar seed to himself, and bestowed extraordinary favours upon them. Afterwards, he permitted them, by unbelief and disobedience, to fall, and took in the Gentiles on their believing; and he did even this, with an intent to make that very mercy to the Gentiles a means of provoking the Jews to jealousy, and so bring them to faith, by that which had at first been an offence in the way to it. This was truly a mystery in the Divine conduct, which the apostle most rationally, as well as respectfully, adores, in the concluding words of the chapter.

of his grace, in favours bestowed on those who evidently appeared so undeserving.

SECT. XXVI. Rom. XI. 33.

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

And now to conclude this article, Who in the view of such a series of events must not cry out, *O the* awful and unfathomable *depths of the riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of God!* How rich are the treasures of his mercy, how deep the contrivances of his wisdom, how boundless the stretch of his knowledge! *How unsearchable,* and yet how unquestionable, [*are*] *his judgments! and his ways such as cannot be traced out!*

34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?

36 For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

34 *For who hath* completely *known the mind of the Lord* in these things, *or who hath been his counsellor,* in forming the plan of them? 35 *Who,* whether Jew or Greek, can pretend that he *hath first given* any thing *to him,* or conferred any obligation upon him? Let him make out the claim, *and* we may answer for it, that *it shall be* exactly *repaid him again.* 36 *For,* on the whole, *of him,* as the original Author, *and through him,* as the gracious Preserver, *and for him,* as the ultimate end, [*are*] *all things.*[f] *To him* therefore [*be*] *glory for ever* and ever; and let all the creation join their utmost force to advance it to the highest degrees, and unite their voices in saying, *Amen.*

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 36. LET our whole souls be engaged to glorify this great and blessed God, *from whom, and through whom,* we and all the creatures exist. O that it may be our eternal employment to render adoration, and blessing, and glory to him! To him, whose *counsels none can trace:* to him, who hath prevented us all with the blessings of his goodness; so that far from being able to confer any obligation on him, for which we should pretend to demand a recompense, on the contrary, we must own, that the more we are enabled and animated to do for him, the more indeed are we obliged to him. We cannot pretend to have known the mind of the Lord in all its extent, or to have been admitted into his secret counsels. He is continually doing *marvellous things which we know not:* yet surely we know enough to admire and adore.

(Margin: 33, 35, 34)

[f] *Of him, through him, for him,* &c.] Antoninus, speaking of Nature, that is, of God, has an expression, which one would imagine he had borrowed from this of Paul, εκ σου παντα, εν σοι παντα, εις σε παντα, *all things are of thee, in thee, and to thee.*

SECT. XXVI. We know enough to cry out in raptures of delightful surprise, *O the depths of the riches, both of his wisdom and goodness!*

One instance, though but one of many, we have here before us, in his mysterious conduct towards Jews and Gentiles; in which, occurrences that seem the most unaccountable, and indeed the most lamentable, are over-ruled by God to answer most benevolent purposes. That the sin of the Jews should be the salvation of the Gentiles, and yet the mercy shewn to the Gentiles, in its consequences the salvation of the Jews, and so both should be concluded under sin, that God might more illustriously have mercy on both!

Verse 33

32

26 O that the blessed time were come, when *all Israel shall be saved*; when the *Deliverer*, who is long since *come out of Sion*, 25 *shall turn away iniquity from Jacob*; and *the fulness of the Gentiles come in*, so that *from the rising to the going down of the sun, the Lord shall be one, and his name one.* Our faith waits the glorious event, and may perhaps wait it even to the end of life. But a generation to be born shall see it; *for the gifts and callings* 29 *of God are without repentance.* Let our assured confidence in the Divine promise, travel on, as it were, to the accomplishment over mountains of difficulty, that may lie in our way; and let our hearts be cheered with this happy prospect, under all the grief which they feel, when we see how few now believe the report of the gospel, and to how few God hath revealed his arm.

While the glorious expected event is delayed, let us add our fervent intercessions with God, to these prayers, by which the church has in every age been endeavouring to hasten it on. They are all written in the book of God's remembrance, and shall all be reviewed and answered in their season. Let us in the mean time comfort ourselves with this reviving thought, *that the covenant which God will make with Israel in that day*, is in the main the same he has made with us, *to take away sin.* Eased of such an insupportable burden, that would sink us into final ruin and despair, let us bear up cheerfully against all discouragements, and glory in the gospel which brings us this invaluable blessing; how long, and how generally soever, it may be, *to the Jews a stumbling-block*, and *to the Greeks foolishness.*

SECT. XXVII.

The Apostle enters on a series of most admirable practical exhortations and directions; in which he labours to persuade Christians to act in a manner worthy of that gospel, the excellency of which he had been illustrating. And here, particularly, urges an entire consecration to God, and a care to glorify him, in

their respective stations, by a faithful improvement of their various talents. Rom. XII. 1—11.

ROMANS XII. 1.

I Beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

SECT. XXVII. Rom. XII. 1.

ROMANS XII. 1.

HAVING thus dispatched what I proposed in the argumentative part of the epistle, and suggested a variety of considerations, which may convince you of the great excellency of the gospel, and the singular favour which God has shewn to those Gentiles whom he hath called into the Christian church, and to that remnant of the Jews who are kept in so happy a relation to them, while the bulk of their nation are fallen into a state of rejection; let me now endeavour to animate you all to behave in a suitable manner. *I intreat you therefore*[a], my dear *brethren*, partakers with me in this holy calling, *by* all *the tender mercies of* our most compassionate *God, that* instead of the animal victims, whose slaughtered bodies you have been accustomed to offer, either to the true God, or to idols *you* would now *present*, as it were, at his spiritual altar, *your* own *bodies*, as *a living sacrifice, holy* and *well-pleasing to God.* Let all the members of your bodies, and all the faculties of your souls[b], being sanctified and animated by Divine grace, be employed in the service of him to whom you are under such immense obligations. This he requires of you; [*as*] *your rational service;* and it will be much more acceptable to him than any ceremonial forms though most exactly prescribed in a ritual of his own appointment.

2 And be not conformed to this world:

2 *And* as you desire to engage his approbation and favour, *be not*, in the general course of your temper and actions, *conformed to* the sentiments and customs of *this*

[a] *Intreat you therefore.*] Some apply this to the Gentiles; and as most of the members of the church at Rome were originally so, it is reasonable to believe the apostle had them principally in view: but not excluding the converted Jews, who, as he had just before expressed it, remained as a remnant according to the election of grace, when the rest were hardened, and therefore had surely reason to acknowledge the tender mercies of God to them, and were under strong obligations to devote themselves to him, I have accordingly in the paraphrase applied it to both.

[b] *Bodies and souls.*] The body is here by a usual figure put for the whole person, nor can the soul be now presented to God otherwise than as dwelling in the body, or truly consecrated to him, unless the body be employed in his service; nor, on the other hand, can the body be presented as a living sacrifice, otherwise than as actuated and animated by the soul.—For the propriety of the word παραστησαι, which properly signifies, *placing the victim before the altar;* see Elsner in loc.

SECT. XXVII.

Rom. XII. 2.

vain and sinful *world*; *but* rather *be ye transformed, in the renewing of your mind*: endeavour to become new creatures, contracting new habits, and engaging in new pursuits, under the influence of the Divine Spirit on your hearts; *that you may* not only be speculatively acquainted with the doctrines, precepts, and design of the gospel, but may *experimentally know that will of God* [*which is*] in itself so excellently *good*, and which, as it is most *acceptable* to him, has the most apparent tendency to purify *and perfect* our natures[c].

But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

3 *And I* particularly *say*, and give it in charge[d], *according to that grace which is given to me* as an inspired apostle, *to every one that is among you*, as if personally named, to take the greatest heed, that he be not exalted into spiritual pride, by the gifts and privileges which God hath conferred upon you, I charge each *not to arrogate* [*to himself*] *above what he ought to think*[e], *but that he think* of himself *with* modesty, *sobriety*, and humility; *according to the measure of* that *faith*, and in correspondent proportion to those gifts, *which God hath distributed to every man* among you. And surely when you consider it is God who hath given all, there will appear little reason to magnify yourselves on any distinguishing share of his bounty, which any one may have received. Especially, when you remember, that this distribution is made, not only, or chiefly, for your own sake, but out of regard to the good of the whole:

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

4 *For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same use*, but each its proper function and service, appointed by the wise Former, and gracious Preserver of the whole;

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 *So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of each other*; we should therefore endeavour each of us to know his own place

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

[c] *Good, acceptable, and perfect.*] L'Enfant explains each of these as opposed to the Jewish ritual; this Christian sacrifice being more excellent in itself, Ezek. xv. 25, more pleasing to God, Psal. xl. 7, 8; and tending more to make us perfect, Heb. vii. 19; I understand it as referring to all the preceptive part of Christianity, the excellency of which they will best understand, who set themselves most exactly to practise upon it.

[d] *Say, and give it in charge.*] So λεγειν signifies, Acts xv. 24. See Raphel. Annot. ex Herodot. in loc.

[e] *Not to arrogate*, &c.] Raphelius, Annot. ex. Herod. in loc. has shewn, that ὑπερφρονειν has properly this signification.

and condition, and mutually to make our various capacities as serviceable as we can.

6 Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith:

Rom. XII. 6.

Having therefore gifts, all proceeding from God, the great fountain of every good thing, and *different according to* the diversity of *the grace* that is *given unto us: whether* [*it be*] *prophesy*, as enabling us to foretell future events, or to make discourses for the edification and direction of the church, [*let us be employed in it*] *according to the* degree of our gift, which is in *proportion* to the degree *of faith*, that is respectively in us:[f] *Or* [*having*] *the office of ministry*, as deacons, let a man employ himself actively and faithfully *in* his *ministration*:[g] *or* if he be *an instructor* of catechumens, who are to be fitted for the communion of the church, let him continue humbly, tenderly, and patiently, *in* the work of *teaching*: *Or* if he be *an exhorter*, whose peculiar business it is to urge Christians to duty, or to comfort them in the discharge of it, let him continue *in* his *exhortation*: *he that giveth* any thing to a charitable use [*let him do it*] *with* true *simplicity*, and unfeigned liberality of heart; neither seeking the applause of men, nor any other sinister end which he could desire to conceal: *he that presideth* in the distribution of charities so collected, let him do it *with diligence*;[h] that he may know

7 Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching;

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence;

[f] *According to the proportion of faith.*] Many interpret this, "Do it according to "the general scheme of Divine revela- "tion, not setting up any novel inter- "pretation of scripture, injurious to it." But Raphelius (Annot. ex Xen. in loc.) objects that λογος, not αναλογια would be the proper word to express that. Dr Sam. Clarke, (Posthum Serm. Vol. I. p. 6,) by faith understands the trust reposed in them, or the nature and use of the gift they had; which is a very unusual sense of the word πιςις. The Rhemish Jesuits, suppose, it was a confession or summary of faith, drawn up by all the apostles in conjunction: to which they refer, Rom. vi. 17; chap. xvi. 17; 1 Tim. vi. 20; Gal i. 6; Acts xv. 6; none of which texts seem to imply any thing like it; nor is it pretended that such a creed was ever quoted in antiquity, by the name of αναλογια πιςεως, or indeed that I can find, by any other. If we suppose the prophetic gift to be given in proportion to the exercise of faith, that is, of dependance on God, when he signified a disposition in general to impart it, we have I think the clearest explication the phrase will admit. See Vol. II. p. 371. note [b] on Mark xi. 22.

[g] *Employ himself in ministration.*] It seems the word ἐςω is understood. Compare 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.—The word διακονια properly signifies the *ministration of a deacon*, and so interpreted gives the distinctest sense.

[h] *He that presideth, with diligence.*] In this and the following clause, I follow the interpretation of Lord Barrington, (Misc. Sacra, Vol. I. p. 77—80,) and refer to him for the reasons which I think sufficient to justify it only mentioning the application of the word προςατις, in the same sense to Phœbe, Rom xvi. 2 who could not be supposed a ruler in the church. Προιςαμενος, properly signifies

SECT. XXVII. Rom. XII. 8.

the case proposed, and that *he* may see that nothing be wanting to make the charity as effectual as possible; and as for him *that sheweth mercy*, that is, who has the care of those who on account of peculiarly grievous calamities are the objects of particular compassion, let him do it *with* an obliging *cheerfulness* of temper, cautiously guarding against any disgust at what may seem mean and disagreeable in the offices which must necessarily be performed for such.

he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 On the whole [*let*] *love* [*be*] *undissembled*, and all your expressions of mutual friendship as free as possible from base flattery, and from vain compliment. *Abhor that which is evil*, in every instance, and *adhere* resolutely *to that which is good*. Practise benevolence in all its branches, and every other virtue, with the greatest determination and perseverance of mind; whatever

9 *Let* love *be* without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.

10 discouragements may for the present arise. Do not only abound in the exercises of common humanity; but *in brotherly love*, as Christians, [*be*] *mutually full of tender affection*,[i] yea, cultivate those gentle dispositions of mind with delight; and endeavour to think so modestly of yourselves, that you may still be *in honour preferring one another*. Let each in his turn be ready to think better of his brethren than of himself; and so to prevent them in every office of respect,[k] and out of regard to their advantage, to give up with as good a grace as possible, any thing in which his own honour or personal in-

10 *Be* kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another:

11 terest may be concerned. When you are actually engaged, be *not slothful* and sluggish *in*

11 Not slothful in

one who presides, but, in what, the connection must determine. For the extraordinary mercy exercised among the ancient Christians, see Lucian de Morte Pergrin. apud Opera, Vol. II. p. 764. Edit. Salmur. 1619; and Julian. Epist. xlix.

[i] *In brotherly love* [*be*] *mutually full of tender affection.*] Perhaps the extremely expressive words of the original τη φιλαδελφιᾳ εις αλληλας φιλοςοργοι, might justly be rendered, *delight in the tenderest fraternal affection to each other*. The word φιλοςοργοι not only signifying *a strong affection*, like that of parent animals to their offspring, but *a delight in us*, as the ingenious Dr. Balguy has justly observed in his excellent Sermon on this text.

[k] Preventing them in every office of respect.] Archbishop Leighton well observes, (Expository Works, Vol. II. p. 329,) that the original words τῃ τιμῃ αλληλες προηγεμενοι, are very expressive, and might literally be rendered, *leading on each other with respect*, or *in giving honour going before each other*. This I have endeavoured to express in this clause of the paraphrase, but have retained our version as expressing something of the esteem from which this respectful behaviour should proceed. L'Enfant renders it, *mutually prevent one another with honour*.

business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

SECT. XXVII.

Rom. XII. 11.

the prosecution of your proper *business* in life, but endeavour to rouze your spirits; so that it may be dispatched with vigour and alacrity, and without an unnecessary expence of time. For this purpose be *fervent*, warm and active *in spirit*: and certainly you will see the greatest obligation and encouragement to be so, when you consider that you are *serving the Lord* Jesus Christ[1], to whose condescension and love you are infinitely indebted. May you always attend his service with the greatest zeal and delight, and may every action of life be brought into a due subordination to that great end!

IMPROVEMENT.

How rich were a Christian in practical directions for the conduct of life, even if this excellent chapter were his only treasure of this kind. Let such scriptures as these be welcome to us; the scriptures that teach us our duty, as well as those that display before our eyes the richest variety of spiritual privileges. Indeed it is one of our greatest privileges, to be taught our duty, if at the same time we are inclined by Divine grace to perform it, and if we are not, we have no privileges that will prevent, none that will not increase our ruin.

Verse 1

Wisely does the great apostle lay the foundation of all virtue in a principle of unfeigned *piety towards God*: in *presenting* before him *our bodies as living sacrifices*. How great an honour and happiness will it be to us, to do it.—That we may be engaged to this, let us often think of his tender mercies, so many and so great; and especially, of that most illustrious of all mercies, his redeeming us by the blood of his Son, and calling us into the Christian covenant. Can there be a more reasonable service than this? that we should be consecrated to our Creator, to our Redeemer, to our Sanctifier, to our constant Benefactor, to our supreme end and happiness?—The world indeed neglects him, yea, even what is called the Christian world, neglects him, to such a degree, as if we did not continually see it, we should

[1] *Serving the Lord.*] Several copies for κυριω read καιρω, *serving the time*, that is, husbanding your opportunities; and Dr. Mill, trusting chiefly to the authority of Jerome, and some other Latin translations, admits this as the true reading. But it is by no means supported by an adequate number of Greek manuscripts; and besides, that it would be an unnatural and inelegant expression in that sense, it sinks the noble sense of the commonly received reading so much, that I could by no means persuade myself to follow it. It is a lively exhortation to Christians to be always serving Christ, and to cultivate the temper which the apostle expresses, when he says εμοι το ζην Χριστος, Phil. i. 21, *to me to live is Christ.* It also suggests a motive to enforce the former exhortation; as I have hinted in the paraphrase.

SECT. XXVII. not suppose it to be possible. But let us not in this instance be conformed to it. O that Divine grace may so transform and renew our hearts, that we may not! Nothing *but experience* can teach us, how *good, and perfect, and acceptable, the will of God is*, and how happy a thing it is to be governed, in every respect, by its unerring declarations.

Verse 2

Let us remember, that as our sanctification, so also our humility and our usefulness are his will; and therefore let us endeavour to conquer every high conceit of ourselves, and every sordid and selfish sentiment. Let us often reflect, that we are *all members of each other;* and being so happily united in Christ, have all but one interest, which is that of the body, and of its glorified head. Whether our station in the church be more public, or private; whether our capacities and endowments be more or less distinguished: let us all be faithful, be affectionate, be disinterested, be active, endeavouring to *serve Christ*, and even the poorest of his people, with *simplicity*, with *diligence*, with *cheerfulness; preferring others to ourselves; abhorring* that love which is spent in hypocritical words and unmeaning forms: cultivating that which gives to the soul tenderness, condescension, and vigour. In one word, let us remember we are *serving the Lord*, the Lord Christ: and doing all in his name, and for his sake, let this add fervour to our spirit, zeal to our diligence, and abasement to our humility: for nothing surely can be so animating, nothing so melting, nothing so humbling, as to recollect, on the one hand, how much we owe him, and on the other, how little we are able, how much less we are careful, to do for his service.

3, 4, 7, &c. 11

SECT. XXVIII.

The Apostle pursues his practical exhortations, and particularly recommends devotion, patience, hospitality, mutual sympathy, humility, a peaceful temper, and a readiness to forgive injuries. Rom. XII. 12, *to the end.*

ROMANS XII. 12.

SECT. XXVIII. Rom. XII. 12.

I HAVE been exhorting you, my brethren, to many Christian duties and graces, and among the rest, to the greatest activity and zeal in the service of Christ. Let me exhort you to guard against such a dejection of spirit as would enervate that holy activity and zeal. On the contrary, [*be*] you, that are the servants of Christ, always *rejoicing in* the *hope* of those glorious rewards which your Divine Master, in the riches of his grace, hath set before you; and in that support which he gives you in the way to

ROMANS XII. 12.

REJOICING in hope; patient

in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of the saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 *Be* of the same mind one towards

SECT. XXVIII.

Rom. XII. 12

that eternal glory. And animated by that hope, be *patient in* all the *tribulation* which you may bear in his cause, or from his hands in the wise disposals of his gracious providence. And while under these pressures, *continuing instant in prayer*, draw down those necessary supplies of his holy Spirit which may carry you honourably through all your trials; Liberally *communicating to the necessities of the saints*, and accounting nothing your own which their relief requires you to furnish out: particularly *pursuing* that *hospitality* which present circumstances so peculiarly demand[a], especially towards those strangers that are exiles, or travellers, in the cause of Christianity. Stay not till occasions of this kind force themselves upon you, and much less, till importunity extort the favour, as it were, against your will; but, like Abraham, look out for proper objects of such a bounty, and follow after them, to bring them back to your houses. On the other hand, *bless them who* are pursuing you with evil intentions, and *persecute you* with the greatest severity for conscience sake. Wish them well, and pray for their conversion; yea, if they should go on to revile you, for all the expressions of your love, go on to *bless, and curse* them *not*, though provoked by their bitterest imprecations against you. Make it a constant maxim with yourselves, to maintain a constant sympathy with your brethren of mankind, which may lead you to *rejoice with them that rejoice and* to *weep with them that weep*; to congratulate others on their felicity, and to bear your part with them in their sorrows, as members of one body, who have all, as it were, one common feeling. [*Be*] *entirely united in your regards for each other*[b]. Let

[a] *Pursuing hospitality.*] It was the more proper for the apostles so frequently to enforce this duty, as the want of public inns (much less common, than among us, though not quite unknown, Luke x. 34, 35.) rendered it difficult for strangers to get accommodations, and as many Christians might be banished their native country for religion, and perhaps laid under a kind of bann of excommunication, both among Jews and heathens, which would make it a high crime, for any of their former brethren to receive them into their houses.—For the illustration which the paraphrase gives of the energy of this text, I am obliged to Mr. Blackwell, Sacred Class. Vol. I p. 232.

[b] *Be entirely united in your regards for each other.*] This, on the whole, seemed the most proper version of Το αυτο εις αλληλους φρονουντες; and though Dr. Whitby paraphrases it, " Desire the same things

SECT. XXVIII.

Rom. XII. 16.

each condescend to the rest, and agree with them, as far as he fairly and honourably can; and where you must differ, do not, by any means, quarrel about it, but allow the same liberty of sentiments you would claim. *Affect not high things;* either to possess exalted stations of life, or to converse with those that bear them; *but* rather *condescend,* and accommodate yourselves *to men of low rank;* for it is chiefly among the poorer part of mankind that the gospel is like to prevail: and all Christians ought, in this respect, to bear the image of their great Master, who spent most of his time in conversing with such. *Be not* so *wise in your own conceit,* as to think yourselves above the Divine direction, or that of your fellow-Christians, in this respect,

17 or in any other. *Render to none evil for evil;* nor imagine that any man's injurious treatment of you will warrant your returning the injury; but act in such a cautious and circumspect manner, that it may evidently appear you *provide* against the malignity which will lead many to put the worst constructions upon your actions. And do only those *things* which may be above the need of excuse, and may appear, at the first view, fair and *reputable in the sight of all*

18 *men.* *If it be possible,* and at least *to the utmost of your power,* as far as it is consistent with duty, honour, and conscience, *live peaceably with all men;* not only your own countrymen, or fellow-Christians, but Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and barbarians[c].

19 Upon the whole, my dearly *beloved* brethren, whatever wrongs you may receive, *revenge not yourselves* on those that have injured you; *but rather* yield, and *give place to* the *wrath* of the enemy[d]; *for* God hath forbidden us to indulge

another. Mind not high things but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto

" for others that you do for yourselves, " and would have them desire for you;" I think the sense given above preferable, as it supposes less of an ellipsis, which I would not suppose without apparent necessity.

[c] Greeks and barbarians.] It is remarkable that Dr. Barrow adds, this must include living peaceably with Heretics and Schismatics; Barrow's Works, Vol. I. p. 278, however, the ill treatment which must be expected under these hard names from men of unpeaceable tempers, should never lead any to deny, or slight, what they in their consciences judge the truth of doctrine, or purity of worship.

[d] *Give place to wrath.*] L'Enfant and others explain this of *giving way to the wrath of God,* and quote the phrase of *giving place to the physician,* (Ecclus. xxxviii. 12,) and *giving place to the law,* (chap. xix. 17,) as authorizing that interpretation. But I think, in both those passages, *to give place* signifies to *yield*

wrath: for it is written Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

any of the vindictive passions: as *it is written* (Deut. xxxii. 35.) *Vengeance* [*is*] *mine*, that is, it properly belongs to me, and *I will recompense* the deserved punishment, *saith the Lord.* And indeed it requires the wisdom, as well as the dignity and majesty, of a God, to claim, and manage it aright.

SECT. XXVIII. Rom. XII. 19.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Therefore, instead of bearing 20 any thoughts of hurting them that have used you most unkindly and unjustly, *if thine enemy hunger, feed him,* and *if he thirst, give him drink;* and on the whole, do him all the good in thy power, as Solomon urgeth, (Prov. xxv. 21.) *for by doing this thou shalt*, as it were, *heap coals of fire on his head:*[e] thou wilt touch him so sensibly, that he will no more be able to stand against such a conduct, than to bear on his head burning coals; but will rather submit to seek thy friendship, and endeavour by future kindness to overbalance the injury.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

On all occasions, act on this as an inviolable 21 maxim; and if you do not find the immediate good effect, persist in such a conduct; *be not overcome with evil;* where it seems most obstinate, *but overcome evil with good:* for that is the most glorious victory, and a victory which may certainly be obtained, if you will have the courage to adhere to that, which being good, is always in its own nature, on the whole, invincible, to whatever present disadvantage it may seem obnoxious.

IMPROVEMENT.

SURELY if any thing consistent with the burdens and sorrows of mortal life can inspire constant joy, it must be the Christian hope; the hope of our calling. Surely with a joy thus supported, no tribulation can be too great to be endured with patience; yea, with cheerfulness; since, whatever it be, the glorious Object

Verse 12

without opposing; in which sense it best suits the interpretation given in the paraphrase, which seems most natural. The ingenious and learned Dr. Balguy determines in favour of the other interpretation, (Balguy's Serm. Vol. II. p. 222, 223,) though the force of the reason that follows, is not at all impaired by ours.

[e] *Thou shalt heap*, &c.] The sense cannot be, *thou shalt consume him*, and bring judgments upon him; for that would be applying to revenge, and building upon it, while it is most expressly forbidden. It must therefore intimate, in how tender a manner human nature is affected with favours received from one who has been considered as an enemy.

SECT. XXVIII. of our hope, far from being endangered or diminished by it, shall rather be secured and increased. Let us therefore *continue instant in prayer*, that our minds may be so fortified and ennobled, that we may dwell upon these views.

Well may they keep the heart in so serene and pleasant a state, as to make us ready to do every act of kindness to our fellow-creatures; but especially to those who are heirs with us of this Verse 13 hope; whom we ought to esteem it our great honour and privilege to be able in any measure to assist and accommodate, while they are travelling through this too often inhospitable wilderness, in the way to that kingdom they are going to receive. It is no wonder, that as *we are not of this world, but are chosen* and called *out of the world* to so glorious a prospect, the *world should hate* and persecute us: but let us neither be dismayed, nor in any degree exasperated, with the ill-usage we may meet with. Rather, with unfeigned compassion and good-will to the most injurious of our enemies, let us not only refrain from repaying 17 evil with evil, but render them blessing for curses, and benefits for wrongs: since we have ourselves found such mercy, and *are called to inherit such a blessing.*

15 Let us cultivate those kind and social affections which this great proficient in them all so forcibly inculcates;—that tender sympathy which may teach us to share in the joys and sorrows 16 of all about us—that candid humility, which shall, with graceful unaffected freedom, stoop to the lowest and the meanest, and while it stoops, rise in unsought honours,—that distrust of ourselves, which shall cause us to cease from our own wisdom; that we may repose ourselves upon the unerring guidance of our 18, heavenly Father,—that kindly obstinate attachment to peace, &c. that heroic superiority, which melts down with kindness the heart that but a little before was glowing with rage. And on the whole, that resolute perseverance in goodness, which must 21 be finally victorious, and will assuredly rise with a new accession of strength and of glory, from every seeming defect.

SECT. XXIX.

The Apostle urges obedience to magistrates, justice in all its branches, and love, as the fulfilling of the law: concluding the chapter with a warm exhortation to that universal sanctity which might become, and adorn, the excellent dispensation of the gospel. Rom. XIII. 1, *to the end.*

ROMANS XIII. 1.

AMONG the many exhortations I am now giving you, my Christian brethren, to a life

ROMANS XIII. 1.

LET every soul be

subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God.

Rom. XIII. 1.

worthy of the gospel, that of obedience to magistrates, to which I now proceed, must be acknowledged of distinguished importance. I know the Jews are strongly prejudiced against the thoughts of submitting to heathen governors, but *let* me strictly charge and enjoin it upon *every soul* among you, without exception, how holy soever his profession be, and however honourable his station in the church, that he *be in* all regular and orderly *subjection to the superior* civil *authorities* which Divine Providence hath established in the places where you live. *For there is no* such legal *authority, but* may, in one sense or another, be said to be *from God*. It is his will, that there should be magistrates to guard the peace of societies, and the hand of his providence in directing to the persons of particular governors, ought to be seriously considered and revered. *The authorities that exist* under one form or another, *are* in their different places, ranged, *disposed*, and established *by God*,[a] the original and universal governor. *He* 2 *therefore, who*, by an unjust resistance, endeavours to confound these ranks, and *sets himself*, as it were, in array[b] *against the authority* of which magistrates are possessed,[c] *withstands the disposition of God*, for the public peace and or-

Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:

[a] *Ordained* and established.] So I render the word τεταγμεναι, thinking the English word *ordained* rather too strong. Compare Acts xiii. 48 and the note there. Divine Providence *ranges*, and in fact *establishes*, the various governments of the world; they are, therefore, under the character of governments, in the general to be revered: but this cannot make what is wrong and pernicious in any particular forms, sacred, divine, and immutable, any more than the hand of God in a famine or pestilence is an argument against seeking proper means to remove it.

[b] *Sets himself*, &c.] This seems the most direct import of αντιτασσομενος, which may allude to the word τεταγμεναι, *ranged* or *marshalled* by God, used above with respect to the magistrate, ver. 1.

[c] *Authority* of which magistrates are possessed.] Bishop Hopkins lays great stress on the word εξουσια here used, as signifying a *lawful authority*, and incapable of being applied to an usurper; and in pursuance of this has taken some pains to shew, that the power of the Roman emperors in the apostle's time was not usurped, the people having given up their original rights to the senate, and the senate to the emperors. But as this is a very abstruse question, and the pretended evidence for it very slender and exceptionable, and, so far as I can judge, quite unsatisfactory, so it is certain that εξουσια is sometimes applied to an *usurped* authority, being applied to the *power of Satan*, Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. ii. 2. Compare Eph. vi. 12. Col. i. 13. chap. ii. 15. Rev. xiii. 2, 4, 5. to which several other instances might be added. But the natural and candid interpretation proposed above, needs not the support of such a criticism, and frees us from the endless embarrassment of the question of a king *de jure*, and *de facto*. I should think it unlawful to resist the most unjust power that can be imagined, if there was a probability only of doing mischief by it.

SECT. XXIX. Rom. XIII. 2

der: *and they who withstand* so wise and beneficial an appointment *shall receive to themselves condemnation*, not only from the civil powers they injure, but from the supreme Sovereign, whose laws they break, and whose order they endeavour to reverse.

And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

3 And indeed the good purposes to which magistracy is subservient, make it very apparent, that God must be displeased when that is despised: *for rulers*, in their several offices, *are not* on the whole *a terror to good works but to* such as are *evil*,[d] being intended to encourage the former, by punishing the latter. *Wouldst thou not therefore be afraid of the* high *authority* with which they are invested? *Do that which is good, and thou shalt*, according to the general course of administration, *have* not only protection, but *praise* and respect *from it*.[e] This, I say, may reasonably be expected, and will be the case, where the magistrate understands himself and his office: *for he is*, according to the original appointment, to be considered as elevated above his fellow-men, not for his own indulgence, dominion, and advantage, but that he might be *to thee*, and to all the rest of his subjects, as *the servant* and instrument *of God for* thine and the 4 public *good*. *But if thou dost* that which is *evil*, and so makest thyself the enemy of that

3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same;

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which

[d] *Are not a terror to good works, &c.*] If circumstances arise in which this argument is not applicable, it is reasonably to be taken for granted, that the apostle did not intend here to pronounce concerning such cases. Nothing can be said for interpreting these passages in favour of unlimited passive obedience, which will not prove any resistance of a private injury unlawful, by the authority of our Lord's decision; Mat. v. 39, 40. And this would subvert the great foundation of magistracy itself, which is appointed by force to ward off and prevent it, or avenge such injuries. But it was very prudent in the apostle not to enter into any question relating to the right of resistance in some extraordinary cases; as those cases are comparatively few, and as the just decisions which he could have given on that subject might possibly have been misrepresented, to his own detriment, and that of the gospel. The general laws of benevolence to the whole, so strongly asserted in this context, are in particular cases to determine; and all particular precepts, in whatever universal terms they are delivered, are always to give way to them.

[e] *In the general course of administration, &c.*] As it is certain the case often is otherwise, and was particularly so with respect to Nero, under whom this epistle was written; it is necessary to interpret the words with this latitude. And there is great reason to conclude, *that magistrates in general are in fact much more beneficial, than hurtful, to society*, which is a good argument for a general submission; and that was, as we observed above, all the apostle could intend to enforce. Compare Prov. xviii. 22, where, if I mistake not, the sense is similar, and is to be understood thus, "generally speaking, a wife "is a felicity, rather than a detriment "to her husband, though to be sure there "are many excepted instances."

is evil, be afraid: for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath, upon him that doeth evil.

SECT. XXIX. Rom. XIII. 4.

society of which he is the guardian, thou hast indeed reason to *be afraid*; *for he holdeth not the sword* of justice, which God hath put into his hand, *in vain*[f]. It was given him *for* this very purpose, that he might smite malefactors, and thereby preserve peace and order in his dominions. And in doing it, *he is* to be regarded, not as acting a severe and oppressive part, but as *the servant* and substitute *of God*, *an avenger* appointed in his name, *to* [*execute*,] not his own personal resentment, but the *wrath* of a righteous providence, *against him that doeth evil*, in instances wherein it would be highly improper to leave that avenging power in the hands of private injured persons. *Therefore*, when this is considered, piety, as well as prudence, and human virtue, will teach thee, that *it is necessary to be in* a regular *subjection*, *not only out of regard to* the dread thou mayest reasonably have of that *wrath* and punishment which man can execute; *but also for the sake of conscience*, which will be violated and armed with reproaches against you, if you disturb the public peace, resist the kind purposes of God, by opposing governors, while they act under his commission. This is in effect, what all subjects profess to own, as *on this account you also pay tribute*, which magistrates every-where receive, and is levied *for* this apparent reason, that *they are* to be considered as *the ministers* of the good providence *of God*, who give to the public the whole of their time, care, and labour, and *continually applying themselves to this one affair*, the execution of their high office, have a right to be honourably maintained out of the public revenues, on the most obvious principles of equity and justice.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

6 For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

7 Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute

On this principle, *therefore*, be careful that you *render to all* what is justly *their due;* even though you may have opportunities of defrauding them of it, to your own immediate and temporal advantage. *To whom tribute* [*is due*] for your persons or estates, [*render*] such *tri-*

f *Holdeth not the sword in vain.*] This strongly intimates the lawfulness of inflicting capital punishment, which to deny, is subverting the chief use of magistracy

SECT. XXIX.

Rom. XIII. 7.

bute, or taxes[g]; and *to whom custom* is due, for any commodity exported or imported, render that *custom*; and seek not clandestinely to convey such commodities away without paying it. *To whom reverence* is due[h], on account of their worth and character, render *reverence*; and *to whom* any external form of civil *honour* and respect is due, by virtue of their office and rank of life, though it should so happen that they have no peculiar merit to recommend them to your regard, scruple not to pay all proper marks of *honour*; and guard against that stiffness, which, under pretence of Christian simplicity, by disputing such common forms, may rather indulge pride, and occasion reproach.

is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.

8 On the whole, *owe nothing to any*, *but* endeavour to manage your affairs with that œconomy and prudent attention, that you may as soon as possible, balance accounts with all who have demands upon you, except it be with respect to that debt, which, while you pay, you will be renewing; I mean, the obligation you will ever be under *to love one another*. That I would recommend to your constant care; *for he that loveth another*, *hath* in a compendious manner *fulfilled* every thing that *the law* requireth with respect to him.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another, hath fulfilled the law.

9 *For that* [*precept*,] *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, *Thou shalt not kill*, *Thou shalt not steal*, *Thou shalt not bear false witness* against thy neighbour, *Thou shalt not covet* any thing that is thy neighbour's, *and any other command* respecting our fellow-creatures, *if such* [*there be*] *is summed up in this* one excellent and comprehensive *precept*, which I wish may be engraven on all our hearts, so as to regulate every affection and action; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*. Thou shalt learn to put thyself, as it were, in his place, and to act as, in a supposed change of circumstances,

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

[g] *Tribute to whom tribute.*] It is well known, that the Jews had a favourite notion among them, that they as the peculiar people of God, were exempted from obligations to pay tribute to Gentiles; (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 1; Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. i. § 2, & cap. 8, (al. 7,) § 1,) against which this passage is directly levelled, though without pointing them out in any invidious manner.

[h] *Reverence.*] This must certainly be the import of φοβον here, as also, of φοβηθαι, [illegible] and it expresses the *inward disposition*, as τιμη, *honour*, expresses the conduct and external behaviour, proceeding from it

SECT. XXIX.

Rom. XIII. 10

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

thou couldest reasonably desire to be treated. Now it is very obvious, that *love worketh no evil to one's neighbour;* nay, wherever that noble principle governs, it will put men upon doing all they can, to ward off injury from one another, and to make the life of each as comfortable and happy as possible: *therefore* it may well be said, as it is asserted above, that *love* [*is*] *the accomplishment of the* whole *law.*

11 And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

11 *And* let me urge you to attend to *this,* and to the other precepts I have given, with so much the greater diligence, *knowing the* circumstances of the present *season;* which, if you consider, you will see, *that* [*it is*] *high time now to awake out of sleep,* and vigorously to improve every opportunity of doing good, and prosecuting the great business of life, which is to secure the Divine favour, and your final happiness: *for our* great expected *salvation* [*is*] *now* considerably *nearer than when we* at first *believed.* We have complete salvation in view, it is continually advancing upon us, flying forward, as it were, on the swiftest wings of time; and that which remains, interposed between the present moment, and our entering on the promised reward, is comparatively but a very small span. Act therefore at all times, in a holy subordination to such a circumstance!

12 The night is far spent the day is at hand. let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

12 And since *the night is far advanced,* since the dark state of the present life, in which we often confound good and bad, is almost over, and *the day is drawing near,* even that day which will shew every thing in its proper colours and forms; *let us therefore put off the works,* which suit only a state *of darkness, and* let us *put on the* complete *armour of light.* Let us be clothed with all the Christian graces, which like burnished and beautiful armour, will be at once an ornament and defence, and which will reflect the bright beams that are so gloriously rising upon us.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the

13 *And as* [*being*] now *in the* clear and open *day, let us* take care to *walk* decently, *honourably,* and gracefully;[i] since the lustre already shining about us, requires great

[i Let us walk *honourably* and gracefully.] So εὐσχημόνως exactly signifies. Dr. Milner renders it, let us walk *with a grace.* Fading Flowers of Life, p. 38.

SECT. XXIX.

Rom. XIII. 13

reformation and exemplary holiness: *not in rioting and drunken debauches, not in chambering,*[k] effeminacy, *and lasciviousness;*[l] the vices in which so many are wasting and polluting the hours which nature has destined to necessary repose: *not in the contention and emulation* which the indulgence of such irregular desires often occasion.

> day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 *But* laying aside all these abominations and enormities, let us *put on the Lord Jesus Christ,*[m] our great Sovereign and Saviour. Endeavour, my brethren, to obtain the greatest conformity to his temper, and to appear as like him as possible, in every particular in which he can be the object of our imitation; for that short precept will contain all that is necessary to adorn our profession to its greatest height. *And* while so many are spending their time and thoughts, and substance in those low pursuits which regard only the meaner part of their nature; *make not* a solicitous *provision for the flesh to [fulfil its]* irregular *desires*, nor be intent in pleasing any of the senses, even where their demands may not appear directly criminal; but labour to preserve the superiority of the immortal spirit, and to keep it continually under the discipline of so holy, and so noble a religion.

> 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof.*

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1—5

WHILE subjects learn reverence and obedience to their magistrates, *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake,* may magistrates

[k] *Chambering:* Κοίταις.] This Leigh explains of *lying long in bed.* I will not defend that sense of the word; but I will here record the observation which I have found of great use to myself, and to which I may say, that the production of this work, and most of my other writings, is owing; viz. that the difference between rising at 5, and at 7 of the clock in the morning, for the space of forty years, supposing a man to go to bed at the same hour at night, is nearly equivalent to the addition of ten years to a man's life, of which, (supposing the 2 hours in question to be spent,) 8 hours every day should be employed in study and devotion.

[l] *Effeminacy and lasciviousness.*] I think ασέλγεια, properly signifies a *soft luxurious, and effeminate manner of life,* attended with an affected delicacy very detrimental to that resolution which is so necessary an ingredient in the character of one who would approve himself a *good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

[m] *Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.*] A strong expression for endeavouring to be clothed with all the virtues and graces which composed his character. Which reminds me of what Plutarch tells us concerning the kings of Persia, that on their coronation-day, they put on a robe, which the first Cyrus wore before he was king, to remind them of [illegible] his exemplary temper and behaviour. Plutarch. Artaxerx. apud Opera, [illegible] p. 1851 [illegible] Steph. 1572. [illegible] servable, [illegible] does not say [illegible] "on *purity* [illegible] *sobriety, peacefulness,* [illegible] "*benevolence;*" but he, in effect, says all at once, in saying, *put on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

learn a correspondent care to answer that end of their office, which the apostle makes the foundation of such precepts as these, and to be indeed the *ministers of God for good*, a *terror not to good but to evil works*.

SECT. XXIX.

Verse 3, 4

GREAT BRITAIN, while I write this*, is happy in a government to which this character may justly be applied. Its subjects are under the greatest obligations to the Divine goodness, in having so remarkably overthrown the attempts of those who would have left us little use of the *scripture*; but would themselves have abused it, to have rivetted on the heaviest fetters, by perverting this passage of St. Paul, as if he had intended to subvert every free constitution under heaven, and to put a sword into the hand of merciless tyrants, to kill and take possession of the heritage of the Lord, counting his people but *as sheep for the slaughter*

While we are thus happy, we shall be doubly inexcusable, if we fail in rendering both *honour* and *tribute*, where they are so justly due. 7

May we extend our care to the universal *law of love*; and may it be so deeply engraven on our hearts, that the practice of every social virtue may become easy and delightful. 8, 10

And on the whole, being animated by the *approach of salvation*, may we awake to the vigorous discharge of our duty, and while the light of the gospel scatters about us so bright a ray, may we walk, in every respect worthy of it, that we may have no reason to wish for the veil of darkness to cover our shame. May we not only abstain from the vices, which are here branded with the infamy they deserve; but distinguish ourselves in cultivating the contrary virtues. And that we may do it effectually, may we *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, remembering continually the obligations we are under to consider his life as the model of our own. So shall we make the gospel-*day* yet brighter in the eyes of all around us, and anticipate, while we are here in this world of comparative darkness, the lustre with which we hope, through his influence and grace, to *shine forth in* the celestial *kingdom of our Father*. 11, 12 13 14

* *Anno Domini*, 1749.

SECT. XXX.

The apostle recommends mutual candour; especially, between those Christians who did, and those who did not, think themselves obliged in conscience to observe the ceremonies enjoined by Moses: and strenuously attempts to turn their zeal for, or against,

those observances, into a concern to prepare for their final appearance before the great tribunal. Rom. XIV. 1—12.

ROMANS XIV. 1.

SECT. XXX.

Rom. XIV. 1.

I KNOW there are different opinions among you Christians at Rome, with regard to the obligations of the Mosaic ritual. Now here, I would be solicitous to suggest the most peaceful counsels, and to persuade you to mutual forbearance, and mutual love. As for *him that is* so *weak in the* Christian *faith*, as still to retain the prejudices of a Jewish education on this head, let me prevail on you, Gentile believers, in this respect better instructed in the nature and extent of Christian liberty, to *receive* and converse with him, in a friendly and respectful manner: and do *not* indulge yourselves in the inclination which you may sometimes find, *to* run into *debates*, and distinctions *about matters in doubt* between you[a]. 2 *For one*, that is, the converted Gentile, *believeth* very truly and rightly, *that he may eat all things* indifferently that are good for food; but *another, who is* in this respect *weak, eateth* nothing but *herbs*, and other vegetables[b], to express his humility and self-denial,

ROMANS XIV. 1.

HIM that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

[a] *Debates*, or distinctions, *about matters in doubt.*] Dr. Whitby explains διακρίσεις, of *discriminating persons* according to their *inward thoughts and reasonings* on these heads. The force of the apostle's admirable reasoning in favour of *candour*, and *mutual condescension*, cannot be enervated by saying, as some have unhappily done, that there was no separation between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Had the thing judged indifferent by the latter, and apprehended sinful by the former, been imposed, a separation of communion must have ensued, and the schism on the apostle's principles would have been chargeable on the imposers. When it shall please God to awaken in the governors of established protestant churches, such a spirit of moderation and goodness, joined with a true zeal for religion, as to leave such things in that natural state of indifference, in which almost all sensible men confess it is best they should be left; many separations will cease of course, and the healers of such breaches will do a noble service to their country, be honoured by all that love Christianity, and amply rewarded by the great head of the Church.

[b] *Eateth herbs.*] Dr. Whitby demonstrates, by many learned quotations here, that some of the Jews used to eat no flesh at all, and others looked upon it as a very high pitch of virtue, to abstain from it in Gentile countries, and to subsist entirely on vegetables, because they did not know, but any flesh sold in the shambles might have been offered to idols, or at least contracted some other ceremonial pollutions. Mr. Baxter thinks here is a reference to such Christians as might have been Pythagoreans before their conversion, and might retain their old prejudices against animal food. Baxter's Works, Vol. IV. p. 614. But as that aversion to animal food depended on their doctrine of the transmigration of souls, which no Christian could retain, I think, that interpretation is much preferable, which refers it to Jewish converts, who were also much more numerous in the church, and possibly might some of them come from the Essenes, a Jewish sect peculiarly strict on this head, so that they abstained, not only from flesh but from fruit.

SECT. XXX.

Rom. XIV. 3

3 Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

and to guard against the pollution that might attend even the use of clean animals for food, if they are not killed and prepared after the Jewish manner. Now in this diversity of opinion and practice, exercise candour and forbearance to each other, and all will be well. *Let not him that eateth* all kinds of flesh freely, *despise* and set at nought *him that eateth not* these prohibited or suspicious things, as if he were a weak and superstitious bigot: *and let not him that eateth them not*, but conscientiously abstains from them, *judge* and condemn *him that eateth* them, as a profane, unclean, and intemperate person. *For God hath received him* into the number of his children and people, without laying him under such restraints; and surely where God receives, we should not presume to reject.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

4 Let me ask thee seriously on this occasion, whoever thou mayest be, and how wise and holy soever thou mayest think thyself, *Who art thou that judgest the servant of another?* Wouldest thou think it an indecent thing to meddle with the domestic servant of thy neighbour, or of thy friend, and wilt thou pretend to govern Christ's family, and judge of his administration towards the members of it? Know, that not to thee, but *to his own Master he standeth, or falleth*: it is by Christ he is to be finally acquitted or condemned. *Yea*, if he offends in no greater points than these in debate amongst you, *he shall be upheld* in his Christian profession, and established to eternal salvation; *for God is able to establish him*,[c] and his promises assure us that he will do it.

5 One man esteemeth one day above

5 What I have said with relation to the distinction of meats, may also be applied to that of days. *One man*, that is, the Jewish convert, *esteemeth one day above another*.[d] He thinks their sabbaths and new-moons, and yearly fasts

[c] *God is able to establish him.*] Dr. Whitby explains this of God's convincing the Jewish converts in general, of the indifferency of the Mosaic ritual, by putting a speedy period to the very possibility of observing it in the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem; which would have a peculiar efficacy to wean men's minds from an attachment to it, when considered in connection with Christ's predictions of that event. But I choose the more extensive interpretation, as more obvious, and less liable to objection.

[d] *Esteemeth one day above another.*] Raphelius here produces some apposite passages to shew that κρίνειν in such a construction signifies *to prefer*.

SECT. XXX. Rom. XIV. 5

or feasts have something inviolably sacred, and that the observation of them is matter of perpetual and universal obligation. *Another* educated among the Gentiles, or more thoroughly instructed in the design and genius of Christianity, *esteemeth every day* [*alike*,] without any regard at all to the Jewish institution. *Let every man freely enjoy his own sentiment*,[e] and go on in his own way, without impediment or censure.

6 For we may reasonably hope, that Christians are actuated, in the main, by the same principles, when their practices differ according to the difference of their judgments; so that *he that regardeth a day* in this peculiar manner, *regardeth* [*it*] *to the Lord*, and takes this distinguishing notice of it, because he thinks it is the will of Christ that an honour should still be done to these Mosaic institutions: *and* on the other hand, *he that regards not a day*, it is *to the Lord*, we hope, that *he doth not regard* [*it*;] it is because he thinks Christ will be honoured, by asserting the liberty of his followers in this respect. *He that eateth* freely of whatever comes before him, *eateth to the Lord*, endeavours to glorify him for it, as becomes a good Christian, *and giveth God thanks* for the various provision of his liberal providence; *and he that eateth not* the food which the law forbids, may act on the same pious principles, and we ought charitably to conclude, that it is out of a regard *to* what he apprehends the will of *the Lord*, that *he eateth* it *not;* he cheerfully denies himself what he supposes Christ would have him forbear; *and he* likewise *giveth God thanks* that other food is provided on which he may conveniently subsist, and that he is not forced to eat what he thinks unclean, out of absolute necessity. Now where is the damage of all this, and while such a religious temper towards God prevails, how little does it comparatively signify, whether it acts by the use

another; another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

[e] *Let every man freely enjoy his own sentiment.*] Critics have observed, that the word πληροφορεισθαι is most properly applied to a ship, which is carried on by the wind and tide, with all its sails spread, to forward it, and nothing to obstruct it, and so the meaning is, *let him go on in his own way, without impediment.* How strong a text this is for the right of private judgment, I need take no pains to shew; but the reader may see it vindicated from the evasions of a very celebrated writer, in Mr. Bennet's Appendix to his Irenicum, p. 120,—124.

of these things, or by a conscientious abstinence from them?

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Rom. XIV. 7.

It may well be supposed that this is a just representation of the case; *for* it is certainly what every Christian is obliged to, by virtue of our common profession; as *none of us*, who understands and answers that engagement, *liveth to himself; and none of us*, so far as the circumstances of his death are under the direction of his own choice, *dieth to himself*, nor determines the most important affairs by his own humour, or present interest. *But* from the time of our giving up our names to Christ, as our Divine Master, to the last day and hour of our continuance in life, *if we live*, it is our concern that *we* may *live to the Lord*, and strenuously pursue the great purposes of his glory; *or*, that *if we die, we* may *die unto the Lord*, either by sacrificing our lives to his gospel, if he demands it of us; or, if we expire in a natural way, by behaving to the last, as those who have his love ruling in our hearts, and his sacred cause still in our eye: *so that whether we live or die we are the Lord's;* in consequence of being thus faithfully devoted to Christ, both in life and death, we have the pleasure to think, that living or dying, we are the objects of his care and favour.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.

For to this purpose Christ both died and rose again from the dead, *and* still *continues alive, that he might be* the sovereign *Lord, both of the dead and of the living.* This is the reward bestowed upon him for all his services, as Mediator; that he should be exalted to such a kingdom, and that all Christians should thus own themselves his servants; not only in this present world, but in that unchangeable state into which they pass by death; yea, that all the inhabitants of both worlds, should be ever subject to his disposal and command.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

But the thought of Christ's exaltation furnishes another argument for the candid temper I am now recommending, as it implies his future appearance to the universal judgment, where our temper, in this respect, will be strictly reviewed. In this light then, let me seriously ask, *why dost thou*, O Jewish convert,

10 But why dost

SECT. XXX. *judge thy* Gentile *brother*, for the none observation of those precepts by which thou thinkest thyself bound? *Or why dost thou*, O Gentile believer, *set at nought* and deride, as weak or superstitious, *thy* Jewish *brother*, who conscientiously observes that burthensome ritual from which thou art so happy as to apprehend thyself free? This censoriousness or contempt is greatly to be blamed, and either must very ill become the state in which we are, and must quickly be: *for* no principle of our common faith is more certain than this, that *we must all* at length *appear*, and be solemnly presented *before the tribunal of Christ:* and as it is there that we are all to take our final trial, it must be dangerous

11 presumption to anticipate that judgment. Remember it, my brethren, and ponder seriously upon that awful day; for it will assuredly come *as it is written*, (Isa. xlv. 23,) "[*As*] *I live* "*saith the Lord, surely every knee shall bow* "*unto me, and every tongue shall confess to* "*God;*" and it is then only that such a great and extensive prophecy shall be completely ac-

12 complished: *So that every one of us shall render an account of himself to God.* Let each of us therefore apply it to his own case, and say to his heart, "This account must be mine." And we shall then be too intent on regulating our own conduct, to have either leisure or inclination, to be severe, or pragmatical, in censuring that of our brethren. •

thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

11 For it is written, *As* I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1, &c. Let all the different sects and parties of Christians study to imbibe more of the equitable and lovely temper which the apostle here expresses in so genuine a manner. The divisions of the church are not to be healed by imposing our own sentiments, phrases and forms, and censuring and harassing those that will not acquiesce in them. Such a temper will only engender strife, and mutual provocations will produce mutual increasing resentment.

Let us receive our weaker brethren with tenderness and respect; not despising those who scruple what we practise, not judging those who practise what we scruple. God may receive the one and the other: yea, the different practices of both may proceed from the same general principles, a desire to please him, and to approve ourselves in his sight.

In all this we may unite, in a concern that we may not *live*, or *die to ourselves*, but to *Christ*. His dying love, his living care, may surely challenge this. Worthy is he who *died, and rose again, and revived*, to be adored and obeyed, as *the Lord, both of the dead and of the living!* And such, in one view or another, he will finally appear. We shall know it in that day when we shall be called before his judgment-seat. Conscious of so many crimes, and, even in our best days, of so many imperfections, how shall we dare to appear before him; especially, if we should then receive *judgment without mercy*. Let us not tempt it, to our own everlasting confusion, by shewing no mercy.

SECT. XXX. Verse 7, 8, 9 — 10

Let us not add, to all the offences which may justly cause us to tremble before his tribunal, the criminal arrogance of usurping the place and prerogative of our Judge Let us remember our relation to him, and to each other, and act in a manner becoming it. Let us diligently judge ourselves as those who must be judged of the Lord; so thinking of that grand account, as with an increasing solicitude to prepare for it. *The Lord grant that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day!* The Lord grant that it may also be imparted to many of our brethren, who have differed most from us; yea, and through the indulgence of our compassionate Saviour, to many who have been prone to censure and condemn us for those things which he knows we have done from a desire to please him, or refused to do from a fear of offending him!

12

SECT. XXXI.

The Apostle farther urges the mutual tenderness and candour he had recommended above, by representing the love of Christ to all Christians, the nature and design of his religion, and the danger of a contrary temper. Rom. XIV. 13, *to the end.*

ROMANS XIV. 13.

ROMANS XIV. 13. LET us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather,

SECT. XXXI. Rom. XIV. 13.

I HAVE just been reminding you of your appearance before the tribunal of Christ, and the account which every man must render of himself there: and now give me leave a little farther to pursue the consequence which so naturally follows. *Let us not therefore any longer judge another*[a], *but rather judge ye*, and deter-

[a] *Let us not therefore any longer judge one another.*] It is very plain that the word κρινειν, is here used in two very different senses, as Raphelius on this text, shews γαστιαζειν is used in the same sentence, by Herodotus.

SECT. XXXI

Rom. XIV. 13.

mine *this*, as matter of undoubted and important duty, *not to lay any stumbling-block or scandal before a brother*[b]: to do nothing, how indifferent soever it may be in itself, which may tend to prejudice, discourage, or mislead any other Christian.

that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

14 *I know*, for instance, *and am* at length *persuaded*, *by* the powerful teaching of *the Lord Jesus Christ*, though it be so contrary to the principles I imbibed in my education, and so strenuously maintained in my Pharisaical state, *that nothing* [*is*] *unclean of itself*: that there is no moral turpitude in any kind of food, by which the human body may be nourished: but that, separate from particular circumstances which may arise, it may lawfully be eaten; there is nothing, I say, unclean, *unless* [*it be*] *to him that* in his conscience *accounteth any thing to be unclean*: [*and to him*,] while he retaineth that opinion, [*it is*] indeed *unclean*, how indifferent soever it is in itself; and he will contract guilt before God, by allowing himself in it, whether it be to indulge his own taste, or to engage the favour of others, whilst he hath this inward apprehension of its being unlawful.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, *it is* unclean.

15 *But* if there should not be such an apprehension concerning the thing, in itself considered, yet it may be in effect prohibited to thee, as injurious to others; for *if thy brother be grieved*[c], wounded, and led into sin, *by* [*thy*] use of *meat*, *how dost thou* any longer *walk according to* that noble principle of *love* which I have just now been so earnestly recommending? How innocent soever it may in itself seem, O *do not*, if thou hast any bowels for him, or any regard for thy great Master, *destroy him by thy* rash and unkind use of such particular *meat*, *for whom Christ*, not only submitted to smaller instances of self-denial, but *died* in the agonies of the cross. Is a

15 But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died

[b] *A stumbling-block.*] Some say that σκανδαλον, properly signifies "a piece of wood that supports a trap, which falls, on its being moved," and so may with peculiar propriety signify *whatever may be the occasion of ensnaring another, and drawing him into sin and mischief.*

[c] *If thy brother be grieved.*] Hence it appears, that grieving a person does not signify merely putting him out of humour, but leading him into sin. The grief therefore is that which arises from a consciousness of having acted amiss, in conformity to the example of a person, considered as superior, whether in rank or genius, knowledge or piety.

SECT. XXXI.

morsel of meat indeed, so great a thing to a Christian, that for the sake of it an immortal soul should be endangered, and the blood of a Redeemer injured?

Rom. XIV. 16

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

Let not then your liberty, which is in itself *good, be slandered* and blamed, for being the occasion of so much mischief, as such an ill use of it may probably produce. And surely none of you can pretend to object any thing from conscience, against abstaining from these things.

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

17 *For the kingdom of God*, into which we are entered by believing in Christ, and becoming his subjects, *consists not in meat and drink;* it neither prohibits nor enjoins such things as these, nor is taken up with such little matters; *but* the great design of it is to regulate the temper of its professors, and *in* the most effectual manner to cultivate and promote *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, that is, a cheerful temper, supported by a consciousness of strict integrity, established on principles of universal love, and inspired by the blessed Spirit of God.[d]

18 For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

18 *And he that in these things* faithfully *serveth Christ*, and acts upon the great maxims of his religion, [*is*] *acceptable to God*, whether he abstains from the liberties in question, or allows himself in them: *and* he will also be in the main *approved by men* too; for bad as the world is, upright and benevolent men, who put on no affected rigour and severities in religion, are generally esteemed and beloved in it.

19 Let us therefore follow after these things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

19 Thus *let us therefore* act, and with all possible diligence *pursue the things which tend to peace, and* may promote our *mutual edification* in our common faith.

20 For meat, destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure, but it

20 And whoever thou art, that mayest disrelish the exhortation, in this connection, *do not* indulge so mean a taste, as *for the sake of* this or that particular kind of *meat*, to *destroy* thy brother; who, as a man, would appear *the* noblest *work of God*, in this lower world, if all the peculiar considerations of Christianity were out of the question. It is true *indeed*, and I hinted above, that in themselves *all things* [*are*] *pure; yet* [*that is*]

d A cheerful temper, &c.] This is the interpretation which Dr. Scott has given in his Christian Life, Vol. I. p. 285; and I think, on the whole, preferable to any other.

SECT. XXXI.

morally *evil to a man, that he eateth with offence* and scandal; contrary to the rule of his own conscience, and ensnaring to that of others.

Rom. XIV. 21 In this view, I may venture to say, [*it is*] *good neither to eat* any kind of *flesh*, though that would be a much more rigorous self-denial than I am now pleading for; *nor* even *to drink wine*, though in th most moderate degree; *nor* indeed to indulge to [*any thing*] else, *by which thy brother is scandalized or weakened*, that is, by which he may either be ensnared, or discouraged, in his religious course.

22 Thou wilt perhaps plead, that *thou hast faith* in a superior exercise, and beholdest Christianity in a more extensive and generous view. It is well; and I could not wish thy views should be more contracted. But if thou hast such a just persuasion of the indifference of these things, which others scruple: yet in circumstances like these, which I here suppose, *have it to thyself before God*: content thyself that he is witness to it, and conceal those apprehensions, just as they may be, in thine own breast, when they cannot be published with advantage, or without offence. But permit me to add, upon this occasion, *happy* [*is*] *he who doth not condemn himself in the thing which he alloweth*: it is a happy thing for a man to be quite easy in what he does, and free, not only from the reproaches, but the suspicions of his conscience, and to use even lawful enjoyments only in a lawful and

23 regular degree. *But he that* really in his conscience *maketh a difference* between one sort of food and another, *is condemned* by God as a sinner, *if he eat* out of unbridled appetite, vain complaisance, or weak shame. It must in such a case be criminal, *because* [*he eateth*] *not with faith*, that is, with a full satisfaction in his own mind, that God allows and approves the action. *For* it may be laid down as a general maxim in all these cases, that *whatsoever* [*is*] *not of faith, is sin*; since the Divine authority ought to be so sacred with every man, as to engage him, not only to avoid what is plainly and directly contrary to it, but what he apprehends, or even suspects, to be so; though that apprehension, or

is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

22 Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

23 And he that doubteth, is damned if he eat, because he *eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith, is sin.

suspicion, should chance to be founded on his own ignorance or mistake. SECT. XXXI.

IMPROVEMENT.

STILL let that great and final *account* which each *must render of himself to God*, be kept in our mind; that we may learn obedience to him, candour to each other, and a tender care to avoid every thing that might give unnecessary offence to our brethren. And in the views of it, let us learn always to reverence our own consciences, so as never to be engaged to do what we suspect to be unlawful: since no consideration can ever balance the infinite evil of offending God, and bringing guilt on our own souls. That is to us unclean, which we esteem to be so, and what is not of faith, is sin. Verse 12; 14–23

Let us also be cautious, that we do not incur guilt and condemnation, even by things which we allow, as in the main lawful; solicitously attending, not only to the general nature, but the probable consequences of our actions. And where there is danger of injuring the souls of others, let us often reflect, that Christ died for them; and estimate, so far as we can conceive it, the value of souls, by the value of that blood by which they were redeemed. 15

Let us also take great heed, that we do not give occasion to others, by our imprudent conduct, to speak evil of that which is in itself good. And that we may not do it, let us study those great and generous notions of religion which this excellent passage of scripture gives us. Let it be written upon our hearts, *that the kingdom of God is not meat or drink*, that it doth not consist in a zeal for, or against, any of the little distinctions by which Christians have been so often divided, and which have been too frequently the occasion of mutual alienation in their affections. Let us study and practise more *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*. The approbation of God, consequent on this, may well support us, though men should censure us as lukewarm; yea, perhaps as hypocritical, and interested too, in the candid regards we shew to those which differ from each other, and from us. God will remember their rashness and forwardness to these uncharitable censures: but let us rather say, "May he cure and forgive them." 16; 17; 18

Yet while we cultivate the amiable temper here set before us, bad as the world is, we may hope that we shall be excepted by many; and indeed, in proportion to this knowledge of our real character, by all whose acceptance and friendship is most to be valued. Let us not therefore be discouraged at any ill usage, which in particular instances we may meet with; but still *follow the things that make for peace*, and *conduce to mutual edification*: 19

SECT. XXXI. and *the God of peace will be with us*, and *Jesus*, the great *Lord of the church, which is his house*, will smile on our attempts to build it up into one united and beauteous edifice, till he calls us to his temple above, where all is order, and harmony, and love for ever.

SECT. XXXII.

The Apostle farther urges mutual condescension by new motives; particularly the example of Christ, and the goodness of God to us all, and the regard which Christ had shewn to Jews and Gentiles, in bringing or sending the gospel to them, according to the tenor of prophecies, which he adds to the list of those produced above. Rom. XV. 1—17.

ROMANS XV. 1.

SECT. XXXII. Rom. XV. 1. SEEING *therefore*, my brethren, it is so dangerous for any to do that concerning which they are not in their consciences satisfied that it is assuredly lawful; we ought to take great care, that we do not, by our uncharitable impositions, or irregular examples, lay a temptation in their way to do it. And *we who are strong*, that is, who perfectly understand the liberty which Christianity gives to its professors, *ought*, with all tender sympathy and compassion, *to bear the infirmities of the weak*, not only tolerating them, but in some instances restraining our own inclinations, out of a regard to their advantage, *and not* as too many do, *to please ourselves*, to gratify our own inclinations and humours, whether others be comforted or grieved, edified or ensnared.

2 On the contrary, *let every one of us* rather make it his care, so far as he lawfully and conveniently can, to *please* [*his*] *neighbour*, where it may be *for* [*his*] real *good*, and condescend even to his ignorance and prejudices, where there is reason to hope it may conduce *to* his *edification*, and that of the church; which is nearly interested in the mutual tenderness of its members for each other.

3 And surely we must be disposed to act such a part towards our brethren; *for* we all well know, that the Lord Jesus *Christ*, our great and Divine Master, though so infinitely exalted above us, *pleased not himself; but*, when he vouchsafed in

ROMANS XV. 1. WE then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification,

3 For even Christ pleased not himself;

SECT. XXXII. Rom. XV. 3.

but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

mercy to visit this low world of ours, instead of studying his own ease and pleasure, he submitted to an almost continued series of self-denial, mortification, and trouble, for our sakes. He considered the weakness and infirmities of those about him, that he might teach them, and train them up for service, as they were able to bear it. (Mark iv. 33.) Yea, he even submitted with the greatest gentleness, to much reproach and contempt; *as it is written*, (Psal. lxix. 9,) in words which may well be applied to him; "*The* "*reproaches of those who reproached thee, are* "*fallen upon me*[a]. I have placed myself in a "world, where I have been afflicted with the "wickedness of mankind, which I have con- "tinually seen and heard about me, and which "has been through the whole course of my "life, my continual grief and burden."

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning: that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

4 Now, by the way, I accommodate this text to the purpose before me, because I think, we may make the best we can of every scripture, to produce and cherish good dispositions, and pious sentiments in our hearts. *For whatever things were formerly written, were written for our instruction, that we through patience and consolation of the scriptures*, that is, by the strenuous exercise of that patience which the consolations administered in scripture so powerfully support, *might have* an assured and joyful *hope* in the midst of all our tribulation.

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus:

5 *Now may the God of patience and consolation*, from whom all these gracious and seasonable provisions proceed, *give you* more of this blessed temper; that ye may have *the same mutual affection, according to* the example of *Jesus Christ*[b].

[a] *The reproaches of those*, &c.] Some expositors refer this to Christ's having undertaken by his sufferings to expiate the guilt of sin, every species of which may be considered as a reproach cast on the law and government of God. See Cradoc in loc. I have given what seemed to me the more direct and natural sense, but will not say this other should be excluded, which may well agree both with the words and connection. It must, on the principle on which the apostle goes in many of his quotations, be very pleasant to observe, how all the expressions of the highest piety and devotion, to be found in the writings or discourses of good men of old, are applicable to Christ. But many learned critics maintain, that the lxixth Psalm may, in its original sense, be interpreted as a prophecy of the Messiah. How inexpressible a grief and burden the sight of so much wickedness must have been to so pure and holy a mind, as that of our Lord, it is impossible for us fully to conceive; but were we more like him, we might, and we certainly should, enter more into it, than we generally do

[b] *The same mutual affection, according to the example of Jesus Christ.*] Raphelius

SECT. XXXII.

Rom. XV. 6

That with one mind [*and*] *one mouth* with united hearts and voices, *ye may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, who hath sent his beloved Son into the world, to unite our hearts in love to each other, and to tune them to those devout praises which we address to his blessed self through him. 7 *Therefore*, whether ye were, before your conversion to Christianity, Jews or Gentiles, considering it now as an endearing bond, which causes every difference to be forgot, *receive ye one another*, and embrace one another, with mutual love; *as Christ hath*, without any distinction, *received us* all *to the glory of God.* And greatly will that sublime end, at which he aimed in all, even the glory of his heavenly Father, be promoted, by such endeared affection in his people towards each other.

6 That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

8 *Now I say* this, with peculiar regard to those differences in judgment which I know are so ready to prevail among Christians of different educations, as to the obligations of the Mosaic law. And I would remind you Gentiles, *that* you ought not to suffer your hearts to be alienated from your Jewish brethren, for their attachment to it; because *Jesus Christ was* [*made*] *a minister of the circumcision;* as he was a Jew by birth, he received circumcision himself, in token of his obligation to observe the law: and confined his personal ministry, according to what he himself declared concerning the limitation of his embassy, (Mat. xv. 24,) to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And this was *for the* illustration of the *truth* and fidelity *of God, to confirm* and verify *the promises* so long since [*made*] *to* Abraham and *the* other *fathers* of that nation. 9 *And* I would remind Jewish believers, that he also came *that* he might gather together all the children of God scattered abroad among *the Gentiles*, that they *might glorify God for* [*his*] *mercy*, in granting them a participation of the same privileges; and gave it in charge to his apostles, that they should raise disciples to him

8 Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers:

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy.

has evidently shewn, that αὐτο φρονειν signifies *to agree in an harmonious and affectionate manner*; and that the preposition κατα may be rendered *according to the example of.* Compare Gal. iv. 28; 1 Pet. i. 15; Eph. iv. 24. See Raphel. Annot. ex Herod in loc.

cy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in

SECT. XXXII.

Rom. XV. 9

among all nations, (Mat. xxviii. 19.) So that it is a failure of love and duty to Christ, not to receive them. And accordingly the Gentiles are often spoken of in the Old Testament, as called to join with the Jews, in worshipping the God of Israel: *as it is written*, (Psal. xviii. 49.) "*For this cause will I confess to thee among the* "*Gentiles, and sing praises unto thy name.*[c]" *And again he*, that is, Moses *saith*, (Deut. xxxii. 10 43,) "*Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people;*" which may intimate their being called to participate the blessings once peculiar to Israel. *And again*, David saith, (Psalm cxvii. 1.) 11 "*Praise the Lord, all ye* distant *nations, and,* "*Repeat his praise, all ye people.*" Now surely this glorious privilege of an admission into the church, may justly engage the Gentile nations to praise God, in sublimer strains than any other occasion to which we can suppose either Moses or David to refer. *And again Isaiah* 12 *says*, expressly in this view, (Isa. xi. 10.) "*There shall be a root* from the stock *of Jesse,* "*and one arising to rule over the Gentiles,* [*and*] "*in him shall the Gentiles* hope and *trust;* not "dreading destruction, but cheerfully expecting "protection and salvation from thence." It is evident, therefore, how unreasonable it would be to despise them, and how fit it is affectionately to receive, esteem, and embrace them.

I am willing, therefore, to persuade myself, 13 that this mutually candid temper will prevail among you, and in the confidence of it, I commend you all, without any distinction, to the Divine grace and blessing. *And* accordingly, *may the God of hope*, from whose mercy all the hopes both of Jews and Gentiles are derived, *fill you with all* sacred *joy and peace in believing*.

c *I will confess to thee*, &c.] Diodati, and many others, suppose this to be only an allusion to the words of David in the place referred to. Mr. Pierce has taken great pains to prove, that the whole xviiith Psalm is a direct prophecy of Christ, who is, according to his interpretation, to be considered as speaking throughout the whole of it. In which view he would render the title, "The "song which David sang when God de"livered him from the hand of Sheol, "(instead of Saul,) that is, *the grave.*" But I cannot think his reasoning conclusive, and the 23d verse of that Psalm seems an invincible objection against this solution. I have taken a middle way, which I hope the attentive reader will see reason to approve. Compare chap. ii. 24, where the same method of quoting seems evidently to be taken.

SECT. XXXII.

Rom XV. 13

May he give you a well-grounded complacency and comfort, in consequence of the growing strength of your faith, *that you may abound in a* more cheerful and lively *hope* of eternal glory, *through the power of the Holy Spirit*, confirming all those habits of grace which you experience, as planted and rooted in your souls by his agency.

14 *And* cheerfully do I expect this, when I reflect on what he has already done; for *I am* indeed *myself persuaded concerning you, my brethren, that ye are* already *full of goodness*, and of unfeigned benevolence to each other, *being filled*, through these illuminating influences which you have received, *with all* spiritual *knowledge, and* so well acquainted with the whole nature and genius of the Christian religion, as to be both *able* and inclined *to admonish* and encourage *one another*, as to this meek and peaceable disposition, which I have been recommending, and every other part of an amiable and valuable character.

15 *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly to you*, and enlarged with the greater freedom, *in this part* of my epistle, on the privilege to which God hath called Gentile believers, in some measure *as stirring up your* grateful and pious *remembrance* of them, *because of that* great *grace* and favour *which is given to*

16 *me of God*: Even *that I should be the* ministering *servant of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, administering to them* in his name, and by his authority, *the* infinitely valuable *gospel of God*: *that the offering the Gentiles* to him, as a holy sacrifice, by my hands, *may be acceptable to God, being sanctified* and set apart *by the Holy Spirit*, so plentifully communicated to them in

17 a rich variety of gifts and of graces.[d] *I have therefore*, in this respect, considerable *matter of boasting in Christ Jesus, with respect to the things of God*,[e] and the office which I bear in his

believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you, in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ, in those things which pertain to God.

[d] *Sanctified by the Holy Spirit*, &c.] To explain this of the *miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit*, supposed to have happened at Antioch in Pisidia on converts, who might be called the first-fruits of the idolatrous Gentiles, (Acts xiii. 52,) which is the interpretation advanced by the author of Miscel. Sacra. (Vol. I. p. 112.) and his followers, is not only a needless limitation of the more noble and natural sense here given, but in my judgment, for reasons in part given in my notes on the Acts, and explication which goes upon various principles, precarious, or rather utterly incredible.

[e] *With respect to the things of God*, &c.]

church; which I esteem far more honourable than any services of the Jewish state or priesthood. SECT. XXXII.

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY the abundant communication of the Spirit that is in Jesus Christ, form us more to the amiable temper here recommended! That we may prove the distinguished strength of our minds, by the superior fortitude with which we *bear the infirmities of our weaker brethren*, and may seek the noble pleasure of *pleasing our neighbours for their good, and to their edification.* Let the generous self-denial of our great Lord be, in this view before our eyes: and let us endeavour to feel *the reproaches which are cast upon God*, much more sensibly than those which immediately *fall upon ourselves.* Verse 2, 3

Happy are we in the scriptures, which through Divine Providence and grace have been written for our instruction. May they inspire us with patience and consolation, and establish our souls in humble hope! May our hearts be cemented in the bond of mutual love, *that with one mind and one mouth we may glorify God*, and *receive each other*, with an endearment like that, with which, if we are true believers, notwithstanding our smaller differences, we are received by him. 4, 5,6,7,

Mercy is communicated by Christ to Jews and Gentiles, who therefore are justly required to unite their praises to the root of Jesse. Let us all trust under the shadow of this pleasant plant, and may we be filled *with all joy and peace in believing* What can furnish out so calm a peace, so sublime a joy, as the Christian hope? May *we all abound in it by the power of the Holy Ghost.* And surely if we are filled with such joy and hope, we must be filled with all goodness too, with a truly benevolent temper towards others, which a sense of our own happiness tends most powerfully to promote. We Gentiles have been presented to God as a holy offering; may we be *sanctified more and more by the Spirit;* and established in a firm confidence in Christ, that he will transact all our concerns with God, under the character of the great Mediator: esteeming that the most happy and glorious circumstance in the station, which Providence may have assigned to us, which gives us the greatest opportunity of spreading the honour of so dear a name, and of presenting praises and services to God through him. 8–12, 13, 14, 16, 17

τα προς τον Θεον.] Raphelius very justly observes, that this phrase has a peculiar propriety, when applied to sacerdotal affairs, and especially victims presented to God; of which the apostle is here speaking. Other texts are illustrated by this remark and particularly, Heb. ii. 17. See Raphel. Not. ex Xen. in loc.

SECT. XXXIII.

The Apostle takes occasion from what he had been saying, to mention the extent of his own labours, and his purposes of further journies, in which he hoped to visit the Romans; in the mean time, earnestly recommending himself to their prayers. Rom. XV. 18, *to the end.*

ROMANS XV. 18.

SECT. XXXIII. Rom. XV 18.

I HAVE hinted above at the cause I have to rejoice and boast in Christ, as to what relates to God and the office of my Christian ministry. *For I will not dare to* boast falsely, nor even *speak* any thing *of what Christ hath not* indeed *wrought by me, to bring the Gentiles into obedience.* No; God forbid! that I should either exceed the bounds of truth, in making the report, or arrogate any thing to myself, as my own work, when speaking of the conversions that have indeed been made. I humbly confess that it is Christ who hath wrought whatever is done: yet I boldly declare, that his grace and mercy hath, in this respect, distinguished me *both in word and deed*, by the manner in which he hath enabled me to speak, and the things which he hath strengthened me to perform. He

19 hath wrought *by the* miraculous *energy of signs and wonders*, accomplished in and *by the* amazing *power of the Spirit of God*, which hath not only been plentifully imparted to me, but bestowed on others by the laying on of my hands; *so that* thus supported, *I have* with the happiest effect *fully preached* and explained *the gospel of Christ, from Jerusalem*, Antioch, and Arabia, in the east, *round about* through all the Lesser Asia, and Greece, *even as far as* the western shores of *Illyricum*, which so nearly bor-

20 ders on your own celebrated Italy.[a] *For it has* still *been the object of my ambition*, so far as Providence would permit me to indulge it, *to preach*

ROMANS XV. 18.

FOR I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed.

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the

[a] *As far as* the western shores of *Illyricum.*] Though it is evident from hence, that St. Paul before the date of this epistle, which was in the year 58, had preached the gospel in these regions, it is observable, that Luke takes no notice of this, in the history of the Acts; where he also omits to mention the journey he took to Arabia, on his first conversion, and several other very remarkable facts, referred to in the xith chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians, and elsewhere; and it is very possible, that the visit to Crete, when Titus was left behind to ordain elders, Tit. i. 5, might be of this number.

SECT. XXXIII. Rom. XV. 20.

gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

the gospel, not where Christ was [*already*] *named, lest I should* seem desirous to *build upon another man's foundation,*[b] and so decline the difficulties which attend the settlement of new churches. Others indeed have done this, and little else; *but* I have chosen a different manner of acting; *as it is written,* in words well applicable to the series of my labours, (Isa. lii. 15.) "*They to whom nothing was declared concerning him, shall see, and they who have not heard, shall understand.*" Thus have many received from my mouth, the first notices they have ever had of true religion, and of the method of salvation by the Great Redeemer.

21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard, shall understand.

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

22 The consequence *therefore* was, that *I have been long hindered from coming to you;* which, out of my singular affection for you, I was very desirous of doing: though it be something contrary to the method of proceeding which I generally choose, as you have the Christian religion already, by the Divine grace, most happily planted among you.

23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

23 *But now having no longer place,* either at Corinth, or elsewhere *in these* Grecian *climates* no more work of this kind remaining to be done here, of which Providence seems to open any probable prospect, *and having* also on various accounts *a great desire for many years to come to you;* I will attempt to put it into execution.

24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust

24 *If I go into Spain, I will* endeavour, if possible, to *come to you;*[c] *for I hope* quickly to have an opportu-

[b] *Object of my ambition,* so far as Providence would permit me to indulge it, *to preach the gospel not where Christ was already named,* &c.] The meaning to be sure cannot be, that Paul scorned to come after any other Christian minister; which would have argued a height of temper very inconsistent with the humility of this blessed apostle; and does not agree with what we read in the history of the Acts, of his going to preach the gospel at Damascus, Antioch and Jerusalem; to which it seems probable Troas, if not Corinth, or Ephesus, may be added. It may signify, that, far from declining dangers and oppositions, which might especially be expected in first breaking up, as it were, the fallow-ground of heathen and unevangelized countries, he rather felt a sublime ambition, as φιλοτιμουμενον signifies, (see Elsner, Vol. II. p. 64.) to make the first *proclamation* of a *Redeemer*'s name in places where it had before been quite unheard of. And probably, in mentioning this, he may glance upon those false apostles who crept into churches which he had planted, and endeavoured to establish their own reputation and influence there, by alienating the hearts of his own converts from him, their spiritual father; while like some in our own days, who have trod most exactly in their footsteps, they built on his grand and noble foundations, an edifice of wood, and hay, and stubble, 1 Cor. iii 12.

[c] *If I go to Spain,* &c.] It appears probable from hence, considering the principle which St. Paul chose to govern himself by, of not building on another man's foundation, that no apostle had yet planted any church in Spain: which

SECT. XXXIII.

Rom. XV. 24.

nity of going thither, and *as I pass by*, will contrive if I can, *to see you, and* shall expect *to be brought forward by you in my way thither*, by the kind attendance of some of my friends at Rome, and the refreshment which my spirit may receive from others; *if I may first*, not only have a short interview in passing, but make such an abode with you as to *be in some degree satisfied with your* [*company*:] I say in some degree, for I know that if I were to indulge my own affection to you, my visit would be much longer than the views of duty elsewhere will permit.

to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*.

25 This I speak with relation to my future designs: *but I am now going to Jerusalem, ministering to* the necessities of *the saints* there, by such contributions as I have raised for their subsistence, or may farther collect, as I prose-

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints.

26 cute my journey. *For it hath pleased the* [*churches of*] *Macedonia and Achaia*,[d] *to make a certain collection for the poor saints*, their believing brethren, *that are in Jerusalem*, who are exposed to such peculiar persecution and

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

27 affliction. I say, *it hath pleased them* to do this; *and*, though I acknowledge their free love and generosity in it, yet I may say, that in a sense, *they are their debtors*: *for if the Gentiles* have been brought into so happy a union with God's once peculiar people, and *are made partakers of their spiritual things*, the invaluable blessings of the gospel, first brought to them from Jerusalem, and by persons of the Jewish nation too; *they ought* certainly to be ready, with all religious gratitude and respect, *to minister to them in their carnal things*, and impart the inferior blessings of Providence, in

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

28 which they so much more abound. *Having therefore dispatched this affair, and sealed to them*, that is safely delivered as under seal, *this* present, which is the *fruit* of that love and care which their Gentile brethren so justly ex-

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this

as Dr. Geddes justly observes, very ill agrees with the legend of St. James; for, according to that, he had now been 15 years in Spain, and had erected several bishopricks there. Gedd. Misc. Vol. II. p. 221.

[d] *Churches of Macedonia*, &c.] As we read of no more than one collection of the Macedonian churches, which was that directed by Paul, when he went from Ephesus to Macedonia, (Acts xx. 1.) in the year of Christ 57; this circumstance seems to fix the date of this epistle pretty early in 58; as was observed in the introduction, and the former note there referred to.

SECT. XXXIII. Rom. XV. 29.

fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

press towards them, *I will*, if it please God to give me a favourable opportunity, *come by you into Spain.*

29 And I am sure, that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

And as I doubt not, but you will pray for me, that my coming may be comfortable, and useful for your confirmation in religion; so I have a cheerful confidence, that God will hear your prayers, and may say, that *I know that when I come among you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*, that is, with a full and abundant blessing, attending my ministerial and evangelical labours.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers to God for me;

30 Yet when I write thus, it is not from any particular revelation, to assure me that I shall be enabled to fulfil this purpose. I know that in this journey to Jerusalem, I have, humanly speaking, a very dangerous scene before me, having some of my most mortal and implacable enemies to contend with. And therefore, as I cannot *but* apprehend the interest of the gospel to be concerned in my life and liberty, *I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love* which is the genuine fruit *of the Spirit*[e], *that you join your* utmost *strength* and fervency *with mine*[f], *in [your]* daily *prayers to God for me,*

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe, in Judea, and that my service which I *have* for Jerusalem, may be accepted of the saints;

31 *That I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea*[g]; who are so full of rancour against me, as a deserter from their cause; and will, I am sure, spare no force or fraud to destroy me: *and* also *that my ministration at Jerusalem*, in the charitable affair which I mentioned above, *may be acceptable to the saints*, for whose use it is intended; so that no prejudices in our Christian brethren there, against the believing Gentiles, may prevail so far as to prevent their receiving it with a becoming candour and gratitude:

32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

32 *That* so, in consequence of all, *I may come to you with joy, by the will of God, and that I may be refreshed [together] with you*, in our intended

[e] *By the love of the Spirit.*] Some would explain this of the *love* which the *Spirit* of God bears to us, or the *affection* which we owe to that *gracious agent*; and were we certain, that either of these were the genuine sense, important consequences would follow.

[f] *Join your utmost strength with mine.*] Elsner, (Observ. Vol. II. p. 65.) has a beautiful note on this word συναγωνίσασθαι, to shew how exactly that is the import of it.

[g] *That I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea.*] How extreme their bigotry and rage was, appears from their behaviour to him at the very time here referred to, Acts xxi—xxiv. It was from a sense of the great importance of his life to the cause of Christianity, that he is thus urgent; else we may be assured, he would gladly have given it up. Phil. i. 21, &c.

SECT. XXXIII. Rom. XV. 33.

interview. *And*, in the mean time, *may the God of peace* who has graciously given us that peace with himself, which we esteem the first and greatest of blessings, and hath cemented our hearts in those Christian bonds of peace and love to each other, [*be*] *with you all*, whether I am present or absent. *Amen!*

33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 18, 19

LET us behold with pleasure the modesty and humility which is joined with all the zeal of this holy apostle, while he thus obliquely owns, in a manner which shews how familiar the thought was to his mind, that all he had done in the Christian ministry, and for the propagation and advancement of the gospel, was only what Christ had done by him, to procure such *obedience of the Gentiles, both in word and in deed.*

Adored be the grace that made his labours so successful, and sowed the blessed seed so wide by his diligent hand, from Jerusalem unto Illyricum. Most divine instructions did he give them in matters of faith, and he taught them to express that faith by their works. While he was dead to all thoughts of enriching himself, and in some instances, chose rather to maintain himself, by his own labours, than to subsist on the bounty of others, *his*

25 &c.

liberal soul devised liberal things for his necessitous brethren. He raised a noble collection, and was much concerned, not only that

31

it might be safely, but acceptably delivered.

Well may our souls be edified, by observing the things which lay nearest the heart of this generous apostle, that coming to his Christian friends at *Rome*, *he might come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*, and that if he was spared through their prayers, it might be for public usefulness. St. Paul, dead as he was to human applause, was, from much nobler motives, solicitous about his acceptance; and he shews by his manner of speaking, what a sense he had of the degree in which it depended upon the turn and disposition which God should be pleased to give to the spirits of men: may this just and pious thought frequently dwell upon the hearts of the ministers of Christ!

Some of the prayers, which the apostle so affectionately bespeaks, were answered; and some seemed to be forgotten: Yet did God make, what seemed the rejection of some, the means of answering the rest. He was for a while delivered into the hands of those in Judea, who believed not; and this providence, which might have seemed an invincible obstacle to his design, proved the occasion of bringing him to Rome, and promoted the success of his ministry there.

33

Let us adore the God of grace, and peace, who works the most

important ends, by methods to us unthought of; and let us be greatly cautious, that we do not rashly judge that he hath rejected our prayers, because we do not see them answered in that particular way which might have been more agreeable to our own wishes.

SECT. XXXIV.

The Apostle, after recommending Phœbe to the Romans, particularly salutes several of his friends resident among them. Rom. XVI. 1—16.

ROMANS XVI. 1.

I COMMEND unto you Phœbe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is in Cenchrea:

ROMANS XVI. 1.

HAVING thus dispatched the substance of my epistle, *I* would add, by way of postscript, something relating to a few particular Christian friends, with us, or with you: and first would *recommend to you* the bearer of this epistle, *Phœbe, our sister, who is,* not only partaker with us in the profession of the gospel, but in the office of *a* stated *servant,* or deaconness,[a] *of the church in Cenchrea;*[b] in the neighbourhood of which I write to you.

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

2 And I desire *that you* would *entertain her, in* regard to her relation to *the Lord* Jesus Christ, our common Saviour, with all Christian affection, and *in a manner becoming* those that profess themselves *saints,* separated from the world, to the honour of his name; *and* that you would *assist her in any thing in which she may need it of you; for* I can assure you, *she has been* in her office, *an helper of many, and of myself in particular;* on which account she is well worthy of your regard, and will I hope meet with a very kind reception from all that love me, or have any concern for the common cause.

3 Greet Priscilla

3 I desire you would also *salute* the pious *Priscilla, and* her worthy consort *Aquila,*[c] who have

[a] *A stated servant,* or deaconness.] Compare 1 Tim. v. 9. That there were some grave and pious matrons engaged in such an office, in the primitive church, is, I think, very apparent from these places: but it is obvious there were circumstances which rendered such sort of servants much more useful and necessary in the churches at that time, than they would now generally be.

[b] *The church in Cenchrea.*] As Paul mentions the church in Cenchrea, as distinct from that at Corinth, though Cenchrea lay in the suburbs of it, I must submit to the candid reader, whether it be not probable, that it had a distinct pastor, or bishop of its own.

[c] *Priscilla and Aquila.*] This excellent couple appear, by this passage, to be returned to Rome, on the ceasing of that

SECT. XXXIV. Rom. XVI. 3.

both deserved the name of *my fellow labourers in Christ Jesus*, as they have each of them, according to their different stations and characters, been ready to do their utmost to promote the interest of the gospel amongst us. 4 And indeed they are *persons, who for* the preservation of *my life*, exposed to so many tumultuous dangers, (Acts xviii. 6, 7, 12, 13,) *have*, as it were, *laid down their own necks*, that is, offered themselves to the extremest dangers; *to whom therefore I do not only owe my own* personal *thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles*, whose apostle I peculiarly am, and for whose spiritual liberties and privileges I am always so strenuous 5 an advocate. You will also, I hope, present my sincere *and* affectionate salutation to *the church that is in their house;* as I know there are several other Christians with them, resident in the family, or meeting them for social worship there. *Salute also my beloved Epenetus, who is* one of *the first fruits of Achaia*[d] *to Christ*, in the number of the first Christian converts of these regions, and therefore worthy my particular re-6 membrance. *Salute Mary, who has taken a great deal of pains on our account*, to accommodate me and my companions when we were in her neigh-7 bourhood. *Salute Andronicus*,[e] *and Junias, my kinsmen, and* dear in the bond of Christian fellowship, and united-sufferings too; having once been *my fellow-prisoners; who were* early in great *reputation among the apostles*,[f] *and were*

and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus.

4 (Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.)

5 Likewise *greet* the church that is in their house. Salute my well beloved Epenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ.

6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who al-

edict against the Jews, which had driven them from thence, in the reign of Claudius, Acts xviii. 2. Priscilla seems to have been a woman of great note, and probably of distinguished genius, and influence; which appears, not only from the manner in which she is here named, but also from the edification which the eloquent Apollos received from her instructions, in concurrence with those of her husband

[d] *The first fruits*, &c.] It is very probable he might be converted at the same time with Stephanas, called also the *first-fruits* of Achaia, (1 Cor, xvi. 15.) for there is no manner of necessity to understand by that expression, the very *first Christian convert* Indeed it is possible, Epenetus might be one of that happy family to which this appellation is given.

[e] *Andronicus*, &c.] Dr Jenkins very justly observes, that this list of names can be no objection at all to the authority of this epistle; for it might be an encouragement to the persons thus particularly mentioned, might conciliate some additional respect to them, whereby their usefulness might be promoted, and would render each of these persons a kind of witness to the genuineness of the epistle, as we may naturally suppose it was shewed to each of them. Jenk. of Christianity, Vol. II. p. 37.

[f] *In reputation among the apostles.*] Diodati thinks, that apostles here signifies evangelists; and that the meaning is, that these persons were noted messengers of the churches, 2 Cor. viii. 23; Phil. ii. 25.

SECT. XXXIV.

Rom. XVI. 7.

so were in Christ before me.

also happy *in* being joined to the church of *Christ before me;* and therefore, though once the object of my furious persecuting zeal, are now honoured and beloved as my elder brethren in the Lord.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

8 *Salute Amplias, my beloved in the Lord,* for whom I have a most affectionate friendship, cemented in the bonds of mutual faith and love.

9 Salute Urbane our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

9 *Salute* also *Urbanus, my fellow-labourer in* the gospel of *Christ,* to the service of which he is so faithfully devoted, *and* with him *my beloved Stachys,* of whose friendship I cannot but retain an affectionate remembrance.

10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' *household.*

10 *Salute Apelles,* whose long experienced worth renders him thoroughly *approved in* the cause of *Christ,* as a disciple of a character undoubtedly honourable. *Salute* also *those* [*of the family*] *of Aristobulus*[g], and assure the Christians that hold the lowest station in it, that they are not forgotten by me.

11 Salute Herodion, my kinsman. Greet them that be of the *household* of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

11 *Salute my cousin Herodion,* still dearer to me in the ties of grace, than in those of nature; *and those belonging to* [*the household of*] *Narcissus, who are* believers *in the Lord* Jesus Christ.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

12 *Salute* those excellent women *Tryphena and Tryphosa, who,* according to their stations, *have laboured* with great diligence *in* the service of *the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, who* distinguished herself among many who were faithful and diligent; so that it may properly be said, she *laboured much in the Lord.*

13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

13 *Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord,* whom I esteem as a Christian of a most excellent character; *and* pay the most affectionate respects, in my name, to *his mother and mine*[h]: for so I may

But I rather apprehend with Mr. Cradock, (Apost. Hist. p. 43,) that they were some early converts, who had been known and much esteemed by the apostles, before the dispersion occasioned by the death of Stephen, (Acts viii. 2,) and if so, perhaps Paul might once have been active in persecuting them, and have learned their names at first, with an hostile intent of hunting them down to destruction.

[g] *Those* [*of the family*] *of Aristobulus.*] The Roman church hath consecrated days to the honour of many of the saints mentioned in this chapter, whom they declare, I know not on what sufficient authority, to have been martyrs. See L'Enf. Pref. to the Romans, p. 6, 7. To these they have added Aristobulus, and Narcissus, though there is no certain evidence that they were Christians. It seems most probable, they were persons of high rank, who had each a great family of slaves; and some of them being Christian converts, the apostle would not forget them, low as their rank in life was, when he was saluting his brethren in so particular a manner. We may observe, what a regard the apostle had for foreign churches, when he informed himself of the names, circumstances, and abodes of so many then in Rome.

[h] *His mother and mine.*] Hence some have thought that Rufus was at least half brother to Paul, but perhaps he might in this expression refer to the ma-

SECT. XXXIV.

Rom. XVI. 14.

call her, on acount of that maternal tenderness and care which she has often shewn towards me. *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermes, and* all *the brethren with them*, as if every one of them had been particularly named.

15 *Salute Philologus, and Julius, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the* other sincere *saints* and Christians[i], *that are with them;* whom with the rest of the persons that I have mentioned, I most sincerely honour and love.

16 In a word, whether you be Jews or Gentiles, when you meet at your assemblies, *salute one another with a holy kiss*[k]; and take care that the kiss which you give to each other, at the conclusion of your worship, be expressive of a pure and undissembled affection, and conducted with the gravest and most decent circumstances. All *the churches of Christ* in these parts *salute you;* as they, with me, have heard of the eminent figure you make in religion, and the many excellent persons who are resident among you.

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

IMPROVEMENT.

THOUGH so much of this section be a mere catalogue of names, it is not without its moral and religious instruction. We see in it the good heart of the apostle; how full he was of the sentiments of Christian friendship; how solicitous he was to express his esteem and love for his brethren in the Lord. And God hath made him the means of transmitting to posterity, the memorials of many excellent persons, of whom we no where else read, or hear, any thing: of whom all that we know is, that they were such as deserved the particular affection of St. Paul, and were professors of the gospel at Rome, in the reign of a very worthless and wicked prince, under whom it is highly probable, that some of them suffered martyrdom for Christ.

His large heart opened to embrace them all, whether by birth

ternal care this good woman had taken of him.

[i] *All the saints*, &c] Calvin and others, very justly observe, that had Peter been now at Rome, he would undoubtedly have been named; since no one in this numerous catalogue was of a dignity and eminence, by any means comparable to him; and yet, if he were not there at this time, the whole tradition of the Roman bishops, as the Roman church delivers it, fails in the most fundamental article of all.

[k] *A holy kiss.*] The custom of thus saluting each other, was borrowed from the Jewish synagogue; and as chastely and prudently as it was managed, it seems to have been the occasion of those false and scandalous reports which were so industriously propagated among the heathen of the adulterous and incestuous practices in Christian assemblies; on which account, it seems to have been laid aside very early.

Jews or Gentiles: and as they shared in his salutations, we cannot doubt, but they shared in his prayers too. We find some of these pious and much esteemed friends of the apostle, were women, of whom he speaks with great regard, as of persons whom divine grace had made very useful in the church: who had been helpers of many, and particularly of him; who had *laboured, yea, laboured much in the Lord.* Let not that sex therefore think that it is cut off from the service of Christ, because the ministry is appropriated to men. Eminently useful have many of them been. The most valuable ministers have often been assisted by them, in the success of their work, while their pious care, under the restraint of the strictest modesty and decorum, has happily and effectually influenced children, servants, and young friends; yea, has been the means of sowing the seeds of religion in tender minds, before they have been capable of coming under ministerial care.

Verse 1, 2 — 12

Generous was the zeal, which Aquila, and Priscilla, shewed in exposing even their own lives in the defence of this holy apostle. Great obligations did they, thereby, lay upon all the churches of the Gentiles, and on us, who, at this distance of time, receive so many blessings from the longer continuance of St. Paul's life, which they were ready so heroically to defend at the hazard of their own.

3

4

Truly valuable were these mutual friendships, of which, zeal for Christ was the common bond; lasting, and indeed everlasting. These excellent persons are doubtless the companions of Paul in glory now, and will many of them be *his crown in the day of the Lord.* Some of them indeed *were in Christ before him;* and he speaks of it as peculiarly to their honour. Let those who were early in Christ, rejoice in the thought. Let those who came later into his church, be exhorted to exert themselves with the greater vigour in his service, that they may recover the time they have lost: and let us all learn to esteem it, as the most substantial proof of our love to those who are peculiarly dear to us, to shew, upon all occasions, how sincerely we wish, that they may early form an acquaintance with Christ; that they may constantly walk in him, and grow up in all things in him, as our common Head.

SECT. XXXV.

The Apostle concludes with other salutations, and a necessary caution against those who would divide the church, together with a doxology suited to the general purport of what he had been writing. Rom. XVI. 17, *to the end.*

ROMANS XVI. 17.

NOW I beseech

ROMANS XVI. 17.

AND *now,* having dispatched those salutations, which Christian friendship has largely

SECT. XXXV.

Rom. XVI. 17

dictated, let me conclude my epistle to you, with a few words of additional advice. And *I* would particularly *exhort you, brethren,* to have your eyes upon, and *to mark out* for the caution of others, *those* persons, whether in public or private life, *which cause divisions and offences* [*among you,*] by false doctrines, factious tempers, and scandalous lives: therein doing *contrary to that* pure, certain and uniting *doctrine which you have learned* of us, the apostles of Jesus Christ, who have been commissioned by him, as the authentic teachers of his gospel. *And* when you have discovered such pernicious seducers, *avoid them,* so as to have no intimate converse with them; nor even to permit them to continue in your communion, if they will not be reclaimed by the milder methods of brotherly admonition.

18 *For* you may be assured, that *such,* whatever they may pretend, *serve not the Lord Jesus Christ;* under whose commission we so apparently act, and the nature of whose religion is so holy and benevolent: *but* on the contrary, it is plain they serve *their own belly:* they have only their own secular interest in view, and hope to gain some temporal advantage, by setting themselves up as heads of parties among you; *and by fair speeches, and flattering forms of address*[a], they *deceive the hearts of the innocent* and well-meaning, and lead them into snares of which they are little aware.

19 It is very possible, that having done so much mischief here at Corinth, and at other places, they may also make some attempts upon you; especially considering the figure you make in the Christian world; but I trust their endeavours will be unsuccessful; *for* the report of *your* exemplary *obedience* to the dictates of our holy religion, *is come abroad unto all; therefore I rejoice on your account,* in hope you will overcome this, and every other danger, and maintain the good character you have already gained. *But* I give you this caution out of my abundant

you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

18 For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet

[a] *Flattering forms of address.*] Ευλογια in this connection, has a force, which I knew not how to express, but by this periphrasis. We see here what these weapons are which these false apostles opposed to the miracles of the true.

SECT. XXXV.

Rom. XVI. 19

I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

tenderness and care; because *I am desirous you may be wise*, and sagacious, *with respect to* every opportunity of practising and maintaining *that which is good, and* as *simple* as possible, *with regard to that which is evil:* perfectly free from all ill views, and designs of every kind. And I know, how much the insinuations of those men tend to destroy those benevolent dispositions, which should ever reign in the hearts of Christians, and to fill them with such prejudices against each other, as may produce mutual injuries.

20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

20 *And* I have an agreeable persuasion, that you will take care to maintain this happy mixture of innocence and prudence, and will succeed in that care. Yes, my brethren, I am well assured, that *the God of peace*, from whom we derive all our peace and happiness, and who delights in seeing this peaceful temper prevail among his servants, *will quickly bruise Satan under your feet;* will defeat the artifices by which the great enemy of God and men is endeavouring to insinuate himself into the church, and to infuse his own malignant spirit into its members. God will enable you, animated by the first great promise, (Gen. iii. 15.) which you have seen so illustriously fulfilled, to trample on the sly deceiver; as on a wounded serpent, whose head your great Leader hath already crushed. And for this purpose, *may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which hath already been in so considerable a degree imparted to you, [*be*] still more constantly and abundantly *with you! Amen.*

21 Timotheus my work-fellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater my kinsman, salute you.

21 I add, by way of postscript, that *Timothy my* pious and zealous *fellow-labourer*, to whose affection I am so much obliged, *and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater*, the messengers of the church at Beræa,[b] and both of them *my kinsmen, salute you* with sincere Christian friendship.

22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, sa-

22 *I Tertius*, or Silas, *who wrote* [*this*] *epistle*, while the apostle Paul dictated it to me,[c] as

[b] *Sosipater.*] As it appears from Acts xx. 4, that Sosipater was with St. Paul, when he travelled in Greece, in the year 58, this is one argument for fixing the date of this epistle to that year.

[c] *Who wrote this epistle*, &c.] St. Paul seems not himself to have been very well versed in the Greek characters, Gal. vi. 11. Compare 1 Cor. xvi. 21. He therefore made use of the hand of Silas, or as the Latin would express his name, Tertius, who wrote what the apostle dictat-

SECT. XX V.

his secretary, *do also* most affectionately *salute you in the Lord.*

Rom XVI. 23.

The generous *Gaius*, who is *my host, and* indeed, I may say, *that of the whole church*, so ready is he to every act of hospitality and goodness, *salutes you*, [*and*] *Erastus the steward of the city*, [*also*] *salutes you; and* so doth one *Quartus*, who, though you may not particularly know him, is *a* Christian *brother*[d], whose name I think worthy of being inserted.

24 Once more receive my repeated good wishes, that the best of all blessings may attend you; even that *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* may *be with you all;* to which I again put my cordial *Amen.*

25 *Now*, let me sum up all, with ascribing praise to the great Author of all the blessings, of which I have been writing; even *to him, who* as he has called you to participate these invaluable blessings, *is able to strengthen you*[e] in every virtuous disposition and good resolution; *according to* the tenor of *my gospel, even the preaching of Jesus Christ*, as our only and almighty Saviour, whom I proclaim, wherever I come, to Gentiles, as well as to Jews: a gospel which, however it is opposed as contrary, is indeed most exactly *agreeable to the revelation* which God has now been pleased to make *of that mystery, in ancient times kept in silence*[f], and never before

lute you in the Lord.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.

ed; and I submit to consideration, whether some of the intricate, and some of the unfinished sentences, which we meet with in these epistles, might not be owing to this method of writing by an amanuensis. They, whose variety of business has obliged them to dictate to others, and use their pens in such a manner, will be very sensible, this is no absurd, or very improbable conjecture. Compare Jerem. xxxvi. 17, 18, as an instance of a similar nature.

d *A brother.*] Mr. Pierce thinks this expression intimates, that he was a *Christian minister*, Compare Phil. iv. 21, 22; but I cannot say it appears sufficiently evident.

e *Now to him*, &c.] This doxolgy is found, in many copies, at the end of the 14th chapter, and in the Alexandrian MS. is inserted both there and here. Jerome says, that Marcian rejected the two last chapters, as contrary to his opinion; and Sir Norton Knatchbull conjectures, that, in order to prevent any suspicion, as if the epistle, ended with the 14th chapter, some orthodox Christian transferred this passage from thence, which he supposes to have been in its true place. Dr. Mills is of the same opinion; and supposes the two last chapters to have been added by way of postscript, as the apostle had time, before he sent it away. All the other epistles of Paul end with the benediction.

f *Mystery*, &c.] Many commentators explain these verses as referring to the calling of the Gentiles into the church; and then some of them suppose the χρονοις αιωνιοις to refer to the *division of time by jubilees*; but it is certain, the words will make good and weighty sense on the different interpretation we have given; and as the jubilees so early grew into neglect among the Jews, it would be less natural to suppose, the period of time they measured, to be designed here.

SECT. XXXV.

Rom. XVI. 26.

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:)

so fully exhibited. *But*, adored be his goodness, it is *now made manifest according to the* tenor of the *prophetic scriptures*, *according to the commandment of the eternal God.* And it is not only discovered to us by the Spirit, but publicly made known *to all* the Gentile *nations*, as well as the people of Israel, *for the obedience of faith*; that they, firmly believing it, may yield a correspondent practical submission to it, and so obtain by it everlasting salvation; subjecting themselves in all things *to* the sacred authority of *the only wise God*, who has so prudently contrived, and so effectually executed, this grand scheme. To him, on the whole, [*be*] *glory by Jesus Christ*, in all the churches, and in the general assembly, *to endless ages! Amen.* 27

27 To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever Amen.

IMPROVEMENT

WORTHY are these concluding words of being deeply engraven on every heart. The gospel was a mystery long concealed in the breast of the Divine wisdom, and opened but by imperfect hints, even to the church itself, in former ages. Let us be humbly thankful, *that it is now made manifest*; and that we are among the *nations* who are *called to the obedience of the faith.* Let us be solicitous to answer that call; and if we have already done it in any measure, let us remember, we are still surrounded with many snares and dangers; so that we have continual need of being *strengthened and confirmed* by him who hath done us the honour to *call us into the fellowship of his gospel.* Let us walk worthy of it, and faithfully endeavour to advance its interests, in a noble superiority to all those secular and mercenary motives, by which bad men, under a Christian profession, are often influenced, and in consequence of which, they often abuse even the ministry of religion to the most infamous purposes.

Verse 25, 26, 25, 18

Let us shew, how thoroughly we have imbibed the spirit of this Divine dispensation, by the generosity of our sentiments; guarding both against scandals and divisions; and aiming in wisdom, integrity and love, both to unite and edify, the body of Christ. Satan will indeed lay discouragements and stumbling-blocks in our way, and perhaps may sometimes use very subtle arts to promote discord and division among those who ought to be most dear to each other in the bonds of the Lord. But let us use a holy caution, and commit ourselves cheerfully to the Divine keeping; and we may humbly hope that the God of peace will make us victorious over all the artifice and power of our spiritual enemies, and will shortly *bruise Satan under our feet.* 17, 18

SECT. XXXV.

Let us humbly hope that he will, through *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, in virtue of that great original promise which was given to cheer our first parents, when they lay under their deep distress, and heavy load of new contracted guilt. (Gen. iii. 13.) And as we see how God hath taken the subtile in his own craftiness, and triumphed over Satan, by that event which he laboured to accomplish, as his own triumph, even the death of our Divine Redeemer; let us ascribe to him, *as the only wise God, everlasting glory.* And O, that we may join with all the redeemed world in this ascription, when the *accuser of the brethren*, the great enemy of God and man, with all his adherents and instruments, *shall be cast out for ever!* Amen.

Verse 27

N. B. A note, added to the end of this epistle, says, that *it was written to the Romans, from Corinth, by Phœbe, servant of the church at Cenchrea.* Part of this, the first verse of this last chapter justifies, but as the most ancient manuscripts have not these notes, and some of them are plainly contrary to some passages in the epistle, to which they are affixed, they are to be esteemed of no authority.

THE END OF THE FAMILY EXPOSITOR ON THE ROMANS.

THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR:

OR,

A PARAPHRASE

ON THE

FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS;

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.

VOL. IV.

A

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

PARAPHRASE AND NOTES

ON THE

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE apostle Paul had been the instrument in the hand of God, of planting a numerous Christian church, chiefly of Gentile converts, at Corinth; where his ministry was so successful, that he continued there near two years; (Acts xviii, 1—18.) Corinth was a city of Achaia, situated on the Isthmus, which joins Peloponnesus, (now called the Morea,) to the rest of Greece. From the convenience of its situation for commerce, it abounded in riches, and was furnished with all the accommodations, with all the elegancies and superfluities of life. This by too natural a consequence, led its inhabitants into luxury, lewdness, and all manner of vice; and they were accordingly infamous even to a proverb.

About the space of three years after the apostle had left Corinth, to preach the gospel in other parts of Greece, he had occasion to write this epistle to the Corinthians; which he accordingly wrote from Ephesus, about the year 57, the 3d of the emperor Nero. See Vol. III. sect. 42, note (*d*), and sect. 44, note (*a*.)

The reason for which this epistle was written, was to answer some important *queries* proposed by the Corinthians; and correct the various criminal irregularities and disorders of which they were guilty.

In correcting the abuses with which they were chargeable,

The *first* article on which the apostle thought himself obliged to insist, related to the *parties* and *factions* into which they were fallen, and the opposition which was made by some of them to his own apostolical mission. On this head he largely discourses in the first four chapters; introducing the epistle with an affectionate address to the Corinthian converts, in which he congratulates them on the rich variety of gifts and graces God had bestowed upon them; and animates their hopes of his continued favour in the Lord Jesus Christ, even till the day of his final appearance; (chap. i. 1—9.) And then, expressing his great concern on account of their animosities and factions, he expostulates with them on the unreasonableness of setting up Christian ministers as heads of parties, when they were under such strong engagements to Christ, as their common Saviour and Master; (ver. 10—16.) And as he well knew, that a fond regard to eloquence and philosophy, to which some of the Corinthian teachers made high pretensions, was one great occasion of their divisions, he sets himself to shew how little stress was to be laid upon them; which he illustrates by the choice that God had made of gospel-preachers, entirely destitute of these boasted accomplishments; (verse 17, to the end.) The apostle further explains the reasons for which he had declined all ostentation of eloquence, when he came among the Corinthians, and particularly insists on the extraordinary nature of the facts and doctrines he was to teach, which were of a much higher original than any discoveries which human wit or learning could make, and were to be traced up to the immediate teachings of the Holy Spirit; their nature being so wonderful, that it was difficult for the corrupted minds of men to receive them, even when they were taught; (chap. ii. throughout.) After this the apostle more directly comes to the case of their animosities and divisions, and reproves their carnality in contending about human teachers, and urges many important considerations to cure them of so unbecoming a temper; (chap. iii. 1—9.) Reminding

them for this purpose, of the great trial which every man's work must undergo, the guilt of polluting by unhallowed divisions the temple of God, the vanity of human wisdom in his sight, and of glorying in men, since ministers and all things are appointed for the common benefit of believers; (ver. 10, to the end.) The apostle further discourses with the same view of the nature of the ministerial office, reminds them of the final judgment of him who searcheth all hearts, and the obligation they were under to the Divine goodness for every advantage by which they were distinguished from others; (chap. iv. 1—7.) And as a particular opposition had been made in the Corinthian church to himself, he represents the hardships and dangers to which he and his brethren had been, and were exposed in the service of the gospel, and the obligations which he had in an especial manner laid upon them; warning them not to force him upon severities, which he was very unwilling to use; (ver. 8, to the end.) And having thus discoursed with admirable wisdom, faithfulness, and zeal, he dismisses, for the present, this part of his subject; which, on account of his personal concern in it, was attended with circumstances of peculiar delicacy.

The *second* topic which the apostle considers, was the case of a notorious offender in the Corinthian church, who was guilty of most scandalous *incest* with his father's wife. Animated, therefore, with a warm zeal for the honour of Christ, for the purity and credit of the Christian church, with a benevolent concern for the conviction of the offender, and that others might be deterred from the like enormous practices, he exhorts them, upon these principles, to beware of all unnecessary connection with him, and to exclude him from Christian communion; (chap. v. throughout.)

The *third* article, which, in this epistle, St. Paul exhibits against the Corinthians is, that by a covetous and litigious temper, they were led, contrary to the rules of Christian prudence and love, and sometimes contrary even to the principles of justice, to prosecute their brethren in the heathen courts. This he solemnly censures and condemns; and closes what he offers upon this

head, by warning them of the sad consequences that would attend the indulgence of those criminal dispositions in which Christianity found them, and from which it was intended to deliver them; (chap. vi. 1—11.)

In the *fourth* place, the apostle Paul cautions them against the sin of *fornication*, to which they had been, in their Gentile state, greatly addicted. And it should seem, that having been formerly wont to look upon this heinous crime as lawful, there were, even now, some among them, who reckoned it among the things indifferent; and that they were not in general, sufficiently convinced of its enormity. He therefore introduces what he proposed to say on this subject, with some useful reflections on things really indifferent, and then illustrates the heinous evil of fornication from views peculiar to the Christian religion; (ver. 12, to the end.)

Having thus largely, and with great faithfulness and plainness, corrected some sad disorders with which the Corinthians were chargeable,

The apostle proceeds to the other main end of his epistle; namely, to answer certain important questions which it seems the Corinthians had proposed. And here,

He determines, *First*, Those which related to the *marriage state*. Some questions upon this would naturally arise among the first converts to Christianity, as, Whether they should disown and withdraw from their partners, if they continued unbelievers? And, Whether it was good to marry in the present circumstances of the church? when the contracting new, and especially such near alliances, in those times of persecution, would involve in peculiar difficulties those who should enter into the marriage relation; which they might notwithstanding judge it proper for other reasons to do. Now the apostle shews at his entrance upon this subject, that in some circumstances the marriage state should be entered into, and continued in; but in others, foreborn, particularly at that time; and enjoins wives not to depart from their husbands, and husbands not to dismiss their wives; (chap. vii. 1—11.) He then shews that marriages were not to be dissolved, as some thought they might, on account of a difference in religion; and

very properly urges in the general, contentment with the stations in which they were called, and a concern to serve God in their proper condition, whether married or single, bound or free; (ver. 12—24.) And wi h regard to single persons, he asserts the inexpediency of their marrying in the circumstances of the church at that juncture, inculcating a serious sense of the shortness of time, as the best remedy against inordinate attachment to any secular interest; (ver. 25, to the end.)

A *second* query which the Corinthians had proposed to the apostle to be resolved, was, How far they might comply with their heathen neighbours in *eating things sacrificed to idols?* St. Paul upon this reminds them, that though all Christians might well be supposed to know the vanity of those imaginary deities to which the sacrifices were offered; yet it might prove to some, an occasion of grief and scandal, that the professors of Christianity should partake of these sacrifices in their temple; which therefore charity would require them by all means to avoid; (chap. viii. throughout.) And having, in this instance, urged them to a Christian condescension to their brethren, that he might inforce the principle more strongly, by his own condescension to the weak, in waving to accept of a maintenance from the Corinthians, he introduces what he had to say upon this head, with a short discourse on the right, which, as a gospel-minister, he really had to be supported by those among whom he laboured; which he argues both from natural equity, and scripture principles; (chap. ix. 1—14.) He then proceeds to shew, that out of tenderness to them, and to prevent exceptions to the gospel, he had waved this right, and had been cautious upon all occasions to avoid offence, by exercising self-denial, which he illustrates by a very expressive simile taken from those who contended in the Grecian games; (ver. 15, to the end.) And to recommend this self-denial and holy caution to the Corinthians, he represents the privileges which Israel of old enjoyed, and the displeasure, which, notwithstanding this, God manifested against them in the wilderness, when they indulged their irregular and luxurious desires, and in contempt of the *manna,*

lusted after quails; an example, proper to put the Corinthians in mind of the danger they run of incurring the Divine displeasure, if they should be induced, for the sake of gratifying a luxurious appetite, to partake of entertainments upon *things offered to idols* in the heathen temples; (chap. x. 1—13.) That he might therefore caution them against all approaches to idolatry, he particularly argues, from that communion, which, as Christians, they had with Christ at his table, that they ought to keep at the remotest distance from what might justly be called having communion with devils; (ver. 14—22.) After which he lays down more particular directions, as to the cases and circumstances in which *things sacrificed to idols*, might, or might not, lawfully be eaten; and urges further considerations, to engage them willingly to resign their own gratification for the glory of God, and the good of their brethren; (ver. 23, to the end. Chap. xi. 1.)

The apostle now proceeds to a *third* query, concerning the manner in which *women* should deliver any thing in public, when by a Divine impulse called to it. And after having settled this point, he particularly corrects the indecency of women's prophesying with their head uncovered; (ver. 2—16.) Being thus led to consider circumstances which attended the Christian worship, he takes the occasion naturally afforded, of introducing a discourse upon several abuses among them of a higher nature, with respect to the public celebration of the *Lord's Supper;* leading back their views to its original institution, and inferring from thence the danger of profaning it in the manner they did; (ver. 17, to the end.) Being thus naturally, and as it were accidentally brought to take notice again of the corruptions prevailing in the Corinthian church, the apostle makes some remarks upon their abuse of the *spiritual gifts;* observing that they all proceed from the same sacred agent, and are intended for the edification of the same body, in which all Christians are united; (chap. xii. 1—13.) Inculcating humility in the use of those gifts, and that mutual affection which the Corinthians needed to be taught, he pursues the allegory further, and represents Christians

as so united in one body, as to have entirely the same interest; and insists on a tender care of the least member, from its subserviency to the good of the whole; (ver. 15, to the end.) And to engage the Corinthians to cultivate love, as more important than the gifts about which they contended, he gives a lovely description of that excellent grace; concluding it with a reflection on its perpetual duration, in which it exceeds even faith and hope; (chap. xiii. throughout.) After thus inculcating charity and love, a grace which they needed much to adorn their Christian profession, and direct the exercise of their spiritual gifts, the apostle particularly cautions them against their prevailing vain ostentation of the gift of tongues, and reasons with them concerning the absurdity of the manner in which they, some of them at least, abused that gift; (chap. xiv. 1—19.) And adds, upon the whole, proper motives to prevent that abuse; (ver. 20, to the end.)

Some among the Corinthians doubted, and others denied *the resurrection of the dead.* To prove and establish therefore this great and peculiar article of the Christian faith, the apostle Paul makes some remarks on the certainty and importance of the resurrection of Christ; (chap. xv. 1—11.) And infers from the resurrection of Christ, the certainty of the *resurrection of the dead;* urging the importance of this grand fundamental doctrine of Christianity, and mentioning in the series of his argument, that surrender of the mediatorial kingdom which Christ, at the consummation of all things, shall make to the Father; (ver. 12—34.) After which he answers objections to the resurrection, drawn from our not being able to conceive of the particular manner in which it shall be effected; and concludes with urging this doctrine, as a noble incentive to the greatest readiness, and the warmest zeal in religion; (ver. 25, to the end.)

This is the connection of the several parts of this excellent epistle, and a sketch of the apostle's design; which was to correct the *corruptions* and *abuses,* and answer some *queries* of the Corinthian church. And

though he hath not throughout discussed these two points separately, and with the exactness of systematical method; yet he hath handled his subject in a more natural manner, and given a masterly specimen of the freedom usual in epistolary writings.—Before he concludes, he gives some advice to the Corinthian church, relating to the collection proposed to be made for the poor saints in Judea; (chap. xvi. 1—12.) And then closes all, with some particular salutations and directions, with general exhortations to courage and love, a solemn benediction to true Christians, and an awful anathema against those who were destitute of love to our Lord Jesus Christ; (ver. 13, to the end of the epistle.)

A

PARAPHRASE AND NOTES

ON THE

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

SECT. I.

The Apostle introduces his epistle with a most affectionate and suitable salutation, in which he congratulates the Corinthians on the rich variety of gifts and graces which God had bestowed upon them; and animates their hope of his continued favour in the Lord Jesus Christ, even till the day of his final appearance. 1 Cor. I. 1—9.

1 COR. I. 1.

PAUL called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes, *our* brother;

1 CORINTHIANS I. 1.

SECT. I.

1 Cor. I. 1

PAUL, who was in so peculiar a manner *called* [*to be*] *an apostle*[a] *of Jesus Christ,* not undertaking that office of himself, but invested with it *by* the most express declaration of *the will of God,* signified at the time of that miraculous interposition of which you have so often heard; *and Sosthenes*[b], so well known unto you, whom I esteem as *a* dear *brother*; concur in writing

[a] *Called* [*to be*] *an apostle.*] There is great propriety in every clause of the *salutation* prefixed to this epistle; and particularly in this, as there were those in the church of Corinth who affected to call the authority of his mission into question.

[b] *Sosthenes.*] This was a Corinthian minister who attended Paul in his travels; Compare Acts xviii. 17. It was both humility and prudence in the apostle thus to join his name with his own, in an epistle in which it was necessary to deal so plainly with them, and to remonstrate against so many irregularities.

SECT. II. 1 Cor. I. 2.

this epistle. *To the church of God, which is in* the rich, populous, and learned city of *Corinth,* whose chief glory it is that they, (if they are what their Christian profession speaks them to be,) are *sanctified in* vital union with *Christ Jesus*[c], as well as *called* with an external vocation, by which they are separated from the rest of the world [*as*] the *saints* of God. *And* when we express our affectionate regard to you, and our good wishes for your edification and comfort, we extend them *to all that in every place*[d], *invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*[e], whom we, and all true Christians, join in acknowledging and adoring as *their* [*Lord*] *and* 3 *ours.* May you experimentally know more of the privileges and blessings of his gospel; and for that purpose, [*may*] *grace and peace* [*be*] *with you,* that abundance of Divine influence, which may establish your peace and multiply your prosperity; even *from God,* the original fountain of all blessings, whom we are now taught to look upon as *our* reconciled and gracious *Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord,* that anointed and exalted Saviour, by whom we receive the adoption, and through whose hands all its blessings are communicated to us.

4 I cannot address you, my dear brethren, without assuring you in the first place, that *I always give* humble *thanks to my God on your account,* whenever I mention you before him in prayer, as I frequently do, *for the* abundant *grace of God, given unto you in Christ Jesus;* by virtue of which you have been received into the Chris- 5 tian church, and are made ornaments to it. For

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

3 Grace *be* unto you, and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ:

4 I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God, which is given you by Jesus Christ:

5 That in every

[c] *Sanctified in Christ Jesus.*] I cannot agree with Mr. Locke, in concluding, that this must signify only an *external* separation of the *true religion,* as the Jews were *externally* a holy people, 1 Pet. ii. 8, 9, 10. It seems rather to intimate the persuasion, which he had, that notwithstanding some lamented irregularities among them, which he was faithfully solicitous to reform, they were, in the general, a body of sincere Christians, and the exceptions comparatively few.

[d] *With all that in every place,* &c.] Nothing could better suit the candid and catholic views which Paul was so much concerned to promote in this epistle, than this declaration of his good wishes for *every true Christian* upon earth, whether Jew or Gentile, *learned* or *unlearned,* Greek or Barbarian. To limit it, as Grotius, L'Enfant, and some others would do, to the Christians in Achaia, is to spoil all the *strength* and *beauty* of the sentiment.

[e] *Invoke the name,* &c.] This strongly implies, that it might well be taken for granted, that every true Christian would often pray to Christ, as well as address the Father in his name.

SECT. 1.

1 Cor. I. 5.

thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and *in* all knowledge:

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you.

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, *that ye may be* blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 God *is* faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

ever adored be his holy name, *that in all things ye are enriched in him*[f], with a variety of gifts and graces, and particularly, that ye are made copious *in all utterance, and* ready [*in*] *all knowledge* of spiritual and Divine things; 6 *As the testimony* which I bore to the gospel *of Christ,* when I abode so long at Corinth, *was confirmed among you*[g] by such various communications of the Spirit, in consequence of which you became living witnesses of it to all who knew you. 7 *So that you are deficient in no gift* which can render you useful in his church, while you are *waiting for the* glorious *manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ,* in connection with which, I hope, you will always consider this extraordinary furniture for his service, and improve it so, as to advance your preparation for that day: 8 Still keeping up an humble dependence on him, *who,* if you faithfully apply to him for the continued communication of his almighty aid, *will confirm you to the end;* [*so that*] when so many others shall be condemned, [*ye may be*] presented *blameless,* and irreproachable, *in the* great *day of our Lord Jesus Christ*[h]. 9 Fear not, my brethren, but this blessed day will come, and bring with it those glories which we have so long been taught to expect. Fear not, but Divine grace will still be effectual to bear you through all difficulties in your way to it: for *God* [*is*] *faithful, by whom you were called into the communion* and society *of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,* that you may participate of the blessings he hath purchased; the grand promises of whose kingdom, ye know, refer to that illustrious day of which I have been speaking. Be therefore courageous and cheerful in the assured expectation of it.

[f] *That ye are enriched,* &c.] These respectful congratulations, and acknowledgments of the things in which they did rarely excel, had a most happy tendency to soften their minds; and to dispose them the better to receive the plain reproofs he was going to give them, and which, in their circumstances, faithful love extorted from him.

[g] *Confirmed among you.*] As they could not but know they had received these gifts by the hand of Paul, this expression suggests a rational and tender argument to reduce them to their former affection to him as their spiritual father.

[h] [*That ye may be*] *blameless,* &c.] I think it would make a very low sense of this, to explain it, as some have done, that they would be preserved, *if blameless:* the apostle plainly intends to encourage their hope in that grace which might enable them so to persevere, that they might be found *blameless.*

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. I.

Verse 1, 2

LET us remember, that we also are *sanctified in Christ,* and saints by our calling. Though we are not enriched with such extraordinary endowments as those which were bestowed upon this primitive Corinthian church, yet *we call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ;* and let it be considered as a band of love to all those who join with us to acknowledge him under the character of their Lord and their Saviour. Let it engage us to pray, 3 that the same *grace and peace* may be *with them from God our Father, and from Christ Jesus our* common *Lord,* which we wish for ourselves.

4, &c. Let our hearts be ever open to such noble sentiments of Christian love; not envying the gifts or endowments of others, but rather rejoicing in them, blessing God for them, and praying 6 that they may be largely increased; that so the *testimony of Christ may be confirmed,* by the flourishing state of religion among his followers; than which no confirmation will probably carry a stronger and more affecting conviction into the hearts of those who observe it.

7 To quicken us to this, let us be continually *waiting for the revelation of Jesus Christ;* thinking seriously, how certainly, and how quickly, he will be revealed from heaven, to bring us, and all our brethren, to an account for the improvement we make of the various favours he hath conferred upon us; of which, 9 surely to be *called into the fellowship of Christ,* and the participation of spiritual blessings by him, is to be reckoned among the chief.

Let us rejoice in the fidelity of those promises which encourage us to hope, that he whose grace hath called us to a par- 8 ticipation of the gospel, will *confirm us blameless, even until the day of Christ:* and as we have such prospects of present support and comfort, and of final and complete salvation from him, let us, like this blessed apostle, take a pleasure in sounding forth his 1—9 name, and in keeping up a most affectionate remembrance of him, even of Jesus Christ our Lord and our Saviour, in our own minds, and in those of our Christian brethren.

SECT. II.

The Apostle expresses his great concern on account of the factions in the church of Corinth, of which he had been informed; and expostulates with them, as to the unreasonableness of setting up Christian ministers as heads of parties, when they were

under such strong engagements to unite in Christ, as their common Saviour and Master. 1 Cor. i. 10—16.

1 CORINTHIANS I. 10.

1 COR. I. 10. NOW I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

SECT. II.

I *NOW* hasten to the great things, which I have in view in this address to you: and *I* must first of all *beseech*, as well as exhort *you*, my *brethren*, *by the* venerable and endearing *name of our Lord Jesus Christ*,[a] as you desire either to secure his favour, or to advance his cause and interest in the world, *that ye all* endeavour, so far as possible, to *speak the same thing*, that is, that you do not unnecessarily *and* unkindly contradict each other, but rather maintain a peaceful unanimous temper; [*that*] *there may be no schisms among you*, nor mutual alienation of affection; *but* [*that*] *ye be all knit together in the same mind, and in the same sentiment;* [b] waving unnecessary controversies, debating those which are necessary with temper and candour, and delighting to speak most concerning those great and excellent things in which as Christians you cannot but be agreed, and, which, if duly considered, will cement your hearts to each other in the strictest and most tender bonds.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

11 I urge this with the greater earnestness, *because it hath been certified to me, my brethren, concerning you, by those of Chloe's* [*family*,[c]] *that there are* some *contentions among you*, which by no means become the relation wherein you stand to each other, and the regard which you profess to the gospel of Christ.

12 Now this I say,

12 *Now this I say* and mean by the preceding charge, *that*, if my information be right, there are among you various parties, which avowedly

[a] *By the* venerable and endearing *name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*] This is beautifully and properly opposed to the various human names under which they were so ready to list themselves.

[b] *In the same mind and in the same sentiment.*] It was morally impossible, considering the diversity of their educations and capacities, that they should *all* agree in opinion; nor could he intend *that*, because he does not urge any argument to reduce them to such an agreement, nor so much as declare, what that one opinion was in which he would have them agree. The words must therefore express that *peaceful and unanimous temper* which Christians of different opinions may and ought to maintain towards each other; which will do a much greater honour to the gospel, and to human nature, than the most perfect uniformity that can be imagined.

[c] *Those of Chloe's* [*family.*] Grotius supposes Fortunatus and Achaicus, (mentioned chap. xvi. 17,) to have been her sons.

SECT. II.

1 Cor. I. 12.

set themselves up, as under different heads, though you are not yet come to an open separation; so that *every one of you* lists himself under one or another of those dividing names which are so unhappily used among you on this occasion. One, for instance, *says, I am for Paul,* admiring the plainness and purity of his doctrine; *and* a second, *I* am *for Apollos,* charmed with the eloquence and beauty of his address; *and* a third, *I* am *for Cephas,* the apostle of the circumcision, who may be well called a foundation-stone in the church, as he maintains so strict a regard to the Mosaic ceremonies, *and* the peculiar privileges of God's ancient people; while a fourth says, *I* am *for Christ,*[d] whose superior name, and strict observation of the Mosaic law in his own person, unanswerably testify its perpetual obligation; however any of his ministers may regard, or neglect it.

that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.

13 Give me leave now to ask, *Is Christ divided* into as many parties as you are split into, so that each has a distinct Saviour? or is he become only the head of one party of his followers, that his name should thus be appropriated by way of distinction, as if it were to exclude all the rest of his disciples from any relation to him? And on the other hand, (not to introduce the name of my honoured and beloved brethren upon this invidious occasion,) *was* this *Paul,* whom some of you so much extol, *crucified for you?*[e] *Or were you baptized into the name of Paul;* that you should thus affect to wear it as a mark

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 of distinction? Since there have been these unhappy divisions in your society, and my name, among others, has been made use of to such a purpose, *I thank God, that* it so happened in the course of his providence, that *I baptized none of you, except Crispus,* once the ruler of the

14 I thank God, that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

[d] *I* am *for Christ.*] They might, perhaps, be displeased with Peter, for his condescension to the uncircumcised at Antioch, (Gal. ii. 12) which happened long before the date of this epistle; and might also, as L'Enfant intimates, have valued themselves on having heard Christ preach in his own person, during the time of his ministration on earth.

[e] *Was Paul crucified for you?*] As if he had said, Are your obligations *to me* equal, or comparable to those you are under to our *common Master,* to him who died for us upon the cross? He mentions *himself,* as it was least invidious to do it; though the application was equally just as to every other instance. Compare chap. iii. 6.

SECT. II.

15 Lest any should say, that I had baptized in my own name

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanus besides, I know not whether I baptized any other

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel

synagogue, *and* my worthy friend, the hospitable *Gaius*: *Lest any should* have a pretence to *say*, though ever so falsely, *that I* made the waters of baptism, waters of strife; and *had baptized into my own name*,[f] or in a view of particular and personal attachment to myself, to the injury of my brethren, or of the church in general. I remember, that *I baptized also the family of Stephanus*, the first fruits of Achaia; *and I know not whether I baptized any other*.[g] And indeed, it might very naturally happen, that I should baptize only these few; *for Christ sent me not* so much *to baptize*, which was an office that others of a much inferior rank in the ministry might as well perform; *but to preach the gospel*, and thereby to bring persons to that faith which would entitle them to this appropriate ordinance of Christianity. And I bless God with all my heart, that I have been enabled to do it with such simplicity, fidelity, and success.

1 Cor. I. 15.

16

17

IMPROVEMENT

WHILE we live in the midst of so much darkness, and continue obnoxious to so many prejudices and errors, it will be absolutely impossible for us, so *to speak the same thing*, and so perfectly to be *joined in the same mind and judgment*, as that there should be no diversity of opinion, or expression. But let us labour to obey the apostle's pathetic exhortation, so far as the imperfection of this mortal state may admit. Let us be *intreated in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, that venerable,

Verse 10

[f] *Lest any should say, I baptized into my own name*.] If any should object, that others might do it for him, it may be answered, that Paul's attendants, (who seem to have been Timothy and Silas, Acts xviii. 5, 2 or i. 19.) were persons of an established character, so as to be above such suspicion, that baptism was probably administered too openly to allow of this; and that the apostle herein does as it were, appeal to the baptized persons themselves, challenging any one of them all to say, that the ordinance was administered to him in Paul's name.

[g] *I know not whether I have baptized any other*.] This expression of *uncertainty* as to such a *fact*, is by no means inconsistent with *inspiration*, in that view and notion of it which I have endeavoured to state and vindicate in my *discourse on that subject*, annexed to the third volume of this work. I can by no means think with Bishop Burnet, that the reason, why Paul baptized so few, was, because baptism was delayed till some considerable time after conversion to Christianity, and that the apostle did not stay so long in a place as to do it, (Burnet on the Articles, Art. xxvii. p. 304, Edit. 1699.) for it does not appear to me, that baptism, in these earliest and purest ages, was long delayed, and it is certain that this cause could not take place here, as Paul continued at Corinth 18 months. I rather think the office was generally assigned to inferiors, as requiring no extraordinary abilities, and as being attended with some trouble and inconvenience, especially where immersion was used, as I suppose it often, though not constantly, was.

SECT. II. that endeared, that sacred name, that there be no schism among us, no mutual hatred or animosity, no uncharitable contentions, no severe censures of each other. And as we desire that there may not, let us take care, that we do not impose upon our brethren indifferent things as necessary; and thereby drive them into a separation for conscience sake; and tempt them, at the same time, by our ill usage, to that bitterness of resentment, which would make them what the mere separation would not, transgressors of this precept; and us partakers in their sins.

On the other hand, let none of us be disposed to dispute merely for the sake of disputing, nor unnecessarily oppose the judgment or taste of our brethren, out of an affectation of singularity, or a spirit of contention. But let us rather labour, so far as with a safe conscience we can, to keep the *unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* And while we do this, if our brethren will exact such submissions from us, as they are not warranted by God to require, and as we cannot in conscience pay, let us follow conscience whithersoever it leads us; taking all necessary care, that it be rightly guided; and if in that circumstance our brethren *will cast us out and say, Let the Lord be glorified;* and if to the rest of their unkindness, they will add the farther injury of branding us with the odious names of schismatics, or of heretics; let it be a *light thing to us, to be judged of man's judgment.* Let us not render *railing for railing, nor injury for injury,* but rather, by our meekness, endeavour to overcome their severity; and wait for that happy time, when more of the spirit of knowledge and of charity, shall dispose them to throw down those *middle walls of partition,* by which the temple of God is straitened and defaced, and the convenience, the symmetry, and grandeur of its original plan, so lamentably spoiled. Above all, let us wait that day, *when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest;* and that world, where they, who *love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,* shall retain no remembrance of the controversies that once divided them; unless it be to balance the alienations of time with the endearments of eternity.

Verse 12, 13. In the mean while, let us avoid, as much as possible, a party-spirit; and not be fond of listing ourselves under the name of this or that man, how wise, how good, how great soever. For surely if the names of Peter and Paul, were in this view to be declined, much more are those, which, in these latter days, have so unhappily crumbled the Christian and Protestant interest, and have given such sad occasion to our enemies to reproach us. *Christ is not divided:* nor were Luther, or Calvin, or even Peter, or Paul *crucified for us; nor were we baptized into any of their names.*

Happy shall that disciple of our compassionate Lord be, whom he shall most eminently own in healing the breaches which the

artifices of the tempter, too often abetted by the infirmities of Christ's faithful servants, have already made in the Church, and which the great enemy is continually endeavouring to multiply, and to widen! Happy he, who reverencing and loving his Master's image wherever he sees it, shall teach others to do so too! And who, being himself an example of yielding, so far as he conscientiously can, and of not taking upon him to censure others, where he cannot yield to them, shall do his part towards cementing, in the bonds of holy love, all the children of God, and the members of Christ! How unsuccessful soever his efforts may be, amidst that angry and contentious, that ignorant and bigotted crowd, who miscall themselves Christians; or by whatever suspicious and reproachful names his moderation may be stigmatized; his Divine Master will neither fail to consider it in its true view, nor to honour it with proportionable tokens of his acceptance and favour. Love is the first and greatest of his commands; and after all the clamour that has been made about notions and forms, he who practises and teaches love best, shall *be greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

SECT. II.

SECT. III.

The Apostle, knowing that a fond regard to eloquence and philosophy, to which some of their teachers made high pretensions, was one great occasion of their divisions, sets himself to shew how little stress was to be laid upon them; which he illustrates by the choice which God had made of gospel preachers quite destitute of those accomplishments. 1 Cor. I. 17, *to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS I. 17.

1 COR. I. 17.
FOR Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

I JUST now told you that *Christ did not send me to baptize*, as my principal business, *but* rather *to preach the gospel*[a]; and now I must add, that in the commission which I had the honour to receive from him, he did *not* instruct me to preach it *with* those philosophical niceties of expression, or laboured rhetoric, which many are so ready to esteem as the *wisdom of words*; *lest* if I had attended to these little things, *the cross of Christ should have been* deprived of its just honours, and so have been enervated,

SECT. III. 1 Cor. I. 17.

[a] *Baptize, but to preach.*] As I knew not how to avoid the repetition of this clause, without prolonging the former section beyond due bounds, or making an improper division; I hope the reader will excuse it and a few other instances of this kind which will occur.

SECT. III. 1 Cor. i 17.

and *rendered vain.*[b] For this must have been the natural consequence, when men saw one who pretended to know so much, and to have received such extraordinary discoveries of the gospel, and of Christ crucified as its great foundation, seeming not so much to trust to the grand important facts he averred, as to artificial reasonings, or ornaments of speech, in his manner of representing them to the world.

18 I might well be cautious on this head; *for the doctrine of the cross is indeed folly,* with respect *to* the judgment of *them that are perishing;* to wretched creatures, who are in the way to be for ever undone. They, in that fatal madness, which leads them to speedy ruin, think it a ridiculous and mean thing, to expect salvation from one who seemed unable to save himself; and glory from one who expired in ignominy. *But to us who are saved* from the contagion of so wicked an age, and are in the way to everlasting salvation, *it is* a most illustrious display of *the power of God,* to the noblest purposes our

19 minds can conceive. *For it is written,* and the words are remarkably applicable to this great event, (Isa. xxix. 14.) *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and abolish the sagacity of the prudent;* thus hath God, by this dispensation, poured confusion on human wit and learning, eloquence and philosophy: So that, in allusion

20 to other words of the same prophet, we may say[c], (Isa. xxxiii. 18,) *Where [is] the* celebrated

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent

20 Where is the

[b] *Should have been enervated and rendered vain.*] If the doctrine of the *crucifixion of the Son of God* for the sins of men be indeed *true,* it is undoubtedly a truth of the highest importance, and it might reasonably be expected, that a person who had been instructed in it by such extraordinary methods, should appear to lay the main stress of his preaching upon it. The design of this wonderful dispensation might therefore have been in a great measure frustrated, if it had been the care of the first preachers of it, and particularly of Paul, to study a vain parade of words, and to set off their discourses with those glittering ornaments which the Grecian orators so often sought, and which the Corinthians were so ready to affect. But amidst all the beautiful simplicity which a deep conviction of the gospel tended to produce, there was room left for the most manly and noble kind of eloquence; which therefore the Christian preacher should labour to make habitual to him, and of which this apostle himself is a most illustrious example.

[c] *In allusion to other words of the same prophet we may say.*] I think it would be a very unnecesary labour, to endeavour to prove that these words are an exact translation of the passage referred to; or to shew that passage to be a prophecy of the success of the gospel. The context in Isa. xxxiii refers to the deliverance of Judea from Sennacherib; and the 18th verse describes the Jews as reviewing and meditating on the terror into which they had been thrown;

wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

SECT. III.

1 Cor. I. 20

sage, whose *wise* counsel and penetrating genius have been held in greatest esteem? *Where the* learned *scribe? Where the* ostentatious *disputer of this world*,[d] who hath been most admired for the subtilty of his reasoning, and accuracy of his distinctions? As God of old delivered his people, in spite of all the proud preparations and insolent boastings of the Assyrians, not by their own counsels or arms; but by his almighty power; so doth he now conduct his grand design for the immortal happiness of his chosen. Look upon the dispensation of the gospel as now administered, and say, *hath not God made the wisdom of this world* appear to be *foolish*, and vain, when the highest results of it are compared with those great effects which he knows how to produce without it, and even in opposition to it all.

21 For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of

21 *For* it is indeed so; *since in the wisdom of God*, in the midst of the most stupendous displays of the Divine wisdom with which they were always surrounded, *the world, by* all the improvements of its boasted *wisdom, knew not* the living and true *God*, but ran into the wildest and most absurd sentiments that can be imagined concerning the Deity; (some of them absolutely denying it, and others representing it under the most monstrous notions and forms;) when this I say was generally the case, *it pleased God, by* that which they have impiously ridiculed as *the* most egregious *folly of preaching*,

and then crying out in a noble exultation over all the baffled schemes of the enemy; Where is the scribe, that mustered the forces? Where the receiver, or pay-master, who distributed money or stores among them? Where the engineer, that counted the towers, to determine where the attack might most conveniently be made? In a bold and beautiful allusion to, and imitation of these words though with very different ideas, the apostle proceeds, in the animated clause that follows, to triumph over the oppositions of human science in its various forms, when levelled against God's victorious gospel.

[d] *Sage, scribe, disputer.*] Notwithstanding all the learned pains which Dr. Fuller, in his Miscellanies, (Lib. III. cap. 7.) or Godwin, in his Hebrew Antiquities, (Lib. II. cap. 6.) have taken to prove, that these *three word* refer to *three orders* of learned men among the Jews—*the natural philosopher*, and *the literal*, and the *allegorical interpreter of scripture*; I rather think the apostle meant to include persons most eminent for their learning and sagacity, whether among Jews or Gentiles. The sages of the latter, and the scribes of the former, are well known; and the disputer of the age may include such of both, as, proud of their natural sagacity, were fond of engaging in controversies, and fancied they could confute every adversary. If, as Mr. Locke supposes, the chief leader of the faction against St. Paul, (whom that learned and ingenious writer stiles the false apostle,) called himself a scribe, there will be a peculiar propriety in the use of the word here; but without that supposition, it might easily be understood by the Corinthians, who had so considerable a synagogue of Jews among them.

SECT. III.

1 Cor. I. 21.

by preaching, which is indeed destitute of all the wisdom of which they boast, *to save* multitudes; and those, not such as are the most artful cavillers, or the most sagacious reasoners; but *those that* with honest simplicity and plainness of heart, *believe* what is credibly testified to them, and taught by a superior authority.

22 *For whereas the Jews demand a sign*[e] from heaven to introduce a Messiah, who shall establish a temporal kingdom, victorious over all their enemies; *and the Greeks seek* a depth of *wisdom* and philosophy, or the ornaments of

23 eloquence, and charms of address; *We nevertheless*, conscious of our high commission, and faithful to our important trust, without regarding at all the unreasonable and petulant demands of either, go on plainly to *preach Christ crucified; to the Jews indeed a stumbling-block*,[f] being most directly contrary to all their secular expectations; *and foolishness* in the abstract, *to the Greeks*,[g] who treat it as a low and idle tale,

24 hardly worth the least degree of notice: *But to those who are* by divine grace effectually *called*, *both Jews and Greeks, Christ*, amidst all the dishonours of his cross, is known and acknowledged as *the power of God, and the wisdom of God*; to the converted Jews his mission is confirmed by miraculous evidence, and the accomplishment of prophecies, far more important

preaching to save them that believe.

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

[e] *The Jews demand a sign*, &c.] When we consider how many miracles were continually wrought by, and upon the first preachers and converts of Christianity, this may seem an astonishing demand; but from a memorable passage in Josephus, in which he speaks of an impostor, promising his followers to shew them a sign of their being set at liberty from the Roman yoke, compared with their requiring from Christ, amidst the full torrent of his *miracles*, *a sign from heaven*; I am led to conclude, that the sense given in the paraphrase is the genuine interpretation of this much controverted passage. See the paraphrase and note on Mat. xii. 38; Vol. I. p. 346; and Mat. xvi. 1, p. 477.

[f] *To the Jews indeed a stumbling-block.*] It is well known, that nothing exposed Christianity more to the contempt of the Jews than the doctrine of the cross; they therefore called Christ in derision תלוי *Tolvi, the man that was hanged*, that is, on the *cross*; and Christians, עברי תלוי *Abde tolvi, the disciples of the crucified malefactor*; and by a *paranomasia*, or malignant playing on the word, they called, ευαγγελιον און גלן *Aven gelon, a revelation of vanity*. See Leigh's Critica Sacra in loc.

[g] *To the Greeks foolishness.*] It is well known how profanely Lucian insults the Christians, on worshipping a *crucified impostor*; and many of the fathers speak of the same reproach. Archbishop Tillotson appears to have given credit to the charge brought against the Jesuits, who, to avoid the like offence of the Chinese, denied that *Christ was crucified*, and represented it as an invention of the Jews to asperse Christianity. Tillotson's Works, Vol. II. p. 284.

than any event which their carnal brethren expect; and the believing Gentile finds it infinitely fuller of Divine wisdom and goodness to a lost world, than any system of philosophy that was ever invented. And well may they thus judge,

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

because what *the* world profanely censures as a *folly* most unworthy *of God*,[h] *is*, and in its effects appears to be, incomparably *wiser than* all the projects which the wit of *men* can devise; *and* what it impiously insults, as *the weakness of* Christian teachers, which it charges them with falsely ascribing to *God*, being really his own work, will be found to be *stronger than* all the efforts which *men* can make, either to reform the world any other way, or to obstruct the prevalency and success of this: and this is the necessary consequence of its being indeed Divine.

26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble *are called*:

26 And *for* the farther illustration of this thought, let me call you to *behold*, and seriously to contemplate *your calling*,[i] *brethren*; consider the state of your fellow-Christians in general, and even of those who are employed as ministers of the gospel, and you will perceive [*there are*] *not many wise according to the flesh*, according to those maxims which a sensual world governs itself by, in its principles of secular policy; there are *not many mighty* heroes renowned for their martial courage, there are *not many* of *noble* birth and illustrious rank among men to be found on their list:

27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

27 *But God hath chosen* those that are reputed *the foolish things of the world, that he may shame the wise* men of whom it is most ready to boast; *and the weak things of the world*, who pretend to no extraordinary strength or valour, *hath God chosen, that he may*, by their heroic patience under the severest sufferings, *shame its mighty things*, which have never been able, with all their boasted fierceness, to equal that meek fortitude with

[h] *The folly of God*, &c.] As it is absolutely impossible that there should be either *folly* or *weakness* in God, so it is certain, that the world did not in general believe that there was; and consequently these strong phrases must be used in a very peculiar sense, and must mean that scheme, which was really *his*, though the world, for want of understanding it, represented it as *weakness* and *folly* unworthy of God

[i] *Your calling*.] L'Enfant renders it, *those among you who are called*; which, with many other passages in this version, retains the sense, but departs from the exactness of St. Paul's expression

SECT. III. 1 Cor. I. 28.

which we trace the footsteps of the Lamb of God. *And ignoble things of the world hath God chosen, and things* most commonly and scornfully *set at nought*[k] among men, yea, *and things which are not*[l] in the least regarded, but overlooked as if they had no being, and were below contempt itself, hath God chosen, *that he may abolish* and annihilate *things that are* in the highest esteem, and make the most illustrious figure

29 among the children of men, *That* his great end of humbling us might be more effectually secured, and that *no flesh might boast* of any ad-

30 vantages or distinctions *in his presence.* For on the whole, all we have that is worth mentioning, we receive from Christ, and we receive it from him as the gift of God, since it is *of him,* and his free mercy and grace, that *ye are* called to share *in* the blessings given by *Christ Jesus* his Son. He exhibits this blessed Saviour to us, and disposes our hearts to accept of him, *who,* amidst our ignorance and folly, *is made of God unto us* a source of *wisdom, and* through him, guilty as we are, we receive *righteousness,* polluted as we are, we obtain *sanctification, and* inslaved as we naturally are to the power of our lusts, and the dominion of Satan, we obtain

31 by him complete *redemption.*[m] So *that* we may now indeed boast of our happy change, in whatever point of light it be considered, but it is a boast not of insolent presumption, but humble gratitude, *as it is written,* (Jer. ix. 23, 24, Isa. lxv. 16,) "*He that boasteth let him boast* "*in the Lord,* and in this, that he knoweth me "who exercise loving kindness, judgment, and "righteousness on the earth."

28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea,* and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are,

29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

[k] *Things set at nought.*] Agreeable to this, the Danish missionaries tell us, that most of the Malabarian converts were the poorest of the people, the poets and wits, who valued themselves upon their genius, learning, and politeness, despising the gospel, and doing their utmost to oppose its progress. See Nieuchamp's excellent history of this important mission.

[l] *Things which are not.*] Dr. Whitby shews here, how well this represents the supreme contempt in which the Jews held the Gentiles. Compare Deut. xxxii. 21, Isa. xl. 17.

[m] *Wisdom, righteousness, &c.*] Bos would render the words, *for of him, (in Christ Jesus, who is made of God unto us wisdom,) ye are righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,* that is, completely justified, sanctified, and redeemed.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. III.

MAY Divine grace form the taste of ministers, and their hearers, more to this doctrine of Christ crucified! May he every where be preached, and that be accounted the truest wisdom of words by which his cross may become most efficacious. There cannot be surely a more evident demonstration of folly, or a more dreadful token of approaching ruin, than despising the *wisdom of God, and the power of God.* If we are ever shaken by that contempt for the gospel, which so many are continually ready in our age to express, let us recollect what glorious effects it hath produced; whilst, in the midst of such illustrations of the *wisdom of God, the world by all its wisdom knew not its Maker;* how many believers have been saved, how many by believing are daily brought into the way of salvation? In this view let us triumphantly say, *Where is the wise, the scribe, the disputer of this world:* what has wisdom, learning, disputation done, in comparison of what the plain and simple doctrine of a crucified Saviour has wrought, and is continually working? Let us earnestly pray, that God would, by the power of his grace, disperse the prejudices of men; that the Jews may not so *demand a sign,* as that *Christ crucified* should be a *stumbling-block* to them, nor *the* most learned of the Gentiles so *seek after science,* as that the *wisdom of God* should seem *foolishness to them;* but that both may join in feeling, and owning, how *Divinely wise,* and how *Divinely powerful,* the dispensation of the *gospel* is.

Verse 17, 18, 21, 20, 23, 24

Let us not be offended with our calling, though so few of the wise, the mighty, and the noble, partake of its benefits. If God hath *chosen the weak things,* they shall *confound the mighty; and the foolish,* they shall *shame the wise.* Never shall we find ourselves truly happy, till we come to feel that we are naturally foolish and guilty, polluted and enslaved; and that our *wisdom* and *righteousness,* our *sanctification and redemption* are in Christ, who is *made unto us of God, all* this, and indeed *all* in *all.* Then shall we know, and not till then, what true glory means, even when we can abase ourselves to the dust in his presence, and have learned only to *glory in the Lord.*

26, 27, 30, 31

SECT. IV.

The Apostle farther illustrates the reasons for which he had declined all ostentation of eloquence, when he came among the Corinthians; and particularly insists on the extraordinary nature of the facts and doctrines he was to teach; which were of a much higher original than any discoveries which human wit or learning could make, and were to be traced up to the immediate

teachings of the Holy Spirit; their nature being so wonderful, that it was difficult for the corrupted minds of men to receive them, even when they were taught. 1 Cor. II. 1, *to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS II. 1.

SECT. IV.

1 Cor. II. 1.

I HAVE observed that the design of God in the gospel is of a very humbling nature, admirably calculated to stain the pride of human glory, and bring men to boast in him alone. *And* with truth and pleasure, *I* can say to you, my *brethren*, that in perfect harmony with this wise and excellent scheme, *when I* first *came among you, I came not with the pomp of language*[a], *or* worldly *wisdom*, with the laboured charms of eloquence, or philosophy: for I remembered, that I was *declaring to you* no human invention, which needed or admitted such ornaments or recommendations, but was exhibiting *the testimony of God* to a plain fact, for which I produce authentic evidence by visible Divine operations. I therefore endeavoured to exhibit it in as intelligible a way as I could, and treated it as one who believed that it really came from God, and so needed not the varnishing of human art. 2 *For I* was previously *determined* in my mind, *that* fond as I knew you were of refined speculation, and polite address, *I would* appear to *know*[b], and employ myself to make known, *nothing among you*[c], *but Jesus* as the *Christ*, the great promised Messiah of the Jews, *even that crucified person*[d]; against whom so many scandals are raised. Yet did I resolve steadily to main-

1 COR. II. 1. AND I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

[a] *The pomp of language.*] This certainly alludes to the vain affectation of sublimity and subtilty so common among the Greeks of that age, and very remote from the true eloquence in which (as was observed above) our apostle did so remarkably excel. L'Enfant thinks, he refers to his not being perfectly master of the Greek language in all its purity and elegance with which the Corinthians spoke it; but I prefer the former sense, as more suitable to the original.

[b] *Appear to know.*] In that sense, the word γινωσκω, is used by Pindar (Olymp. xiii.) and it is most natural to give it that signification here.

[c] *Among you.*] There seems a peculiar emphasis in this expression; as if the apostle had said, I did not change my usual method at Corinth, and you know with what glorious success it was attended.

[d] *Even that crucified person:* και τουτον εσταυρωμενον.] The Jews and heathens probably gave Christ this name by way of contempt; but St. Paul declares, that instead of concealing this as an infamy and scandal, it was the main thing he insisted upon; as indeed all the most important doctrines of the gospel stand in a close and natural connection with it. And no doubt but he took them in that connection; for he refers in the course of these epistles, to several doctrines relating to the Father, and the Holy Spirit, as what he had taught them, though not expressly included in the doctrine of the crucifixion.

tain the doctrine of his cross, and endeavour to exalt its honours wherever I came, not excepting your opulent and polite city. *And* to this plan you know I resolutely adhered, though *I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling;* for I knew I had enemies about me on every side, (Acts xviii. 6, 9,) and laboured under natural disadvantages, (2 Cor. x. 10,) and the force of the prejudice which I had to encounter was strong.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.

And you well know, 4 that *my speech* in private *and my preaching* in public [*was*] *not in the persuasive discourses of human wisdom*[e], eloquence or philosophy, nor with that pomp and sophistry of argument which the learned men of the world are so ready to affect. *But* far from being contemptible on that account, it had other much nobler recommendations: for it was *in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power,* by the most convincing evidence, arising, both from the prophecies of the Old Testament inspired by the Holy Ghost, and from the miraculous energy which he hath exerted in and by the apostles, and other ministers of the New.

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

And on this I laid the 5 whole stress; *that your faith should not depend on the wisdom,* reason, or address, *of men, but on the power of God,* a much surer foundation, which shews how little reason you have to value yourselves on any appearance of the former.

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.

Nevertheless, though we want what is com- 6 monly called human wisdom, yet *we speak* the truest and most excellent *wisdom among those who are perfect,* and if I may so express it, completely initiated into these Divine mysteries, such well instructed and experienced souls will bear witness to its incomparable excellence. *But* we speak *not the wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world:* nor that which is admired and sought by the great politicians of the age, whether Jews or Gentiles, *who nevertheless shall soon be brought down,* and abolished, shall find difficult and dreadful scenes arising, in which all

[e] *Persuasive discourses of human wisdom.*] This seems to be the just rendering of the expression πειθοις ανθρωπινης σοφιας λογοις, and so, I think, it is rendered by the celebrated Archbishop of Cambray

SECT. IV.

1 Cor. II. 7.

their boasted sagacity and penetration will be of no avail[f]. *But we*, taught of God to despise the transient vanities which delude them, *speak* what must be infinitely more worthy your most attentive consideration and regard, for it is *the wisdom of God* himself *in a mystery:* that mysterious wisdom, *which was* long *hidden* and entirely unknown, and now appears to contain wonders which no understanding of man or angel can fully penetrate; even that wisdom *which God from eternal ages*[g] *pre-determined* in the secret of his own all-comprehending mind, *for* the great purposes of *our* final salva-8 tion and *glory*[h]. A wisdom this, *which none of the* Jewish *rulers of this* our *age*, or of the heathen that were concerned in it, *knew, for if they had* indeed *known* [*it*] *they would not by any means*[i] *have* presumed to have *crucified* one so greatly their superior, as *the Lord of glory;* wicked as they were, they would for their own sakes have been afraid to attack the Son of God, his long promised Messiah, had they been thoroughly apprised of his high character and dignity. 9 *But* [*this is*] *as it is written*[k], (Isa. lxiv. 4,)

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery: *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory;

8 Which none of the rulers of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is writ-

[f] Politicians of the age, &c.] Mr. Locke insists upon it, as an observation of great importance, that αιων ουτος generally signifies *the Jewish œconomy*; and supposes that the apostle here also aims a silent stroke at the Jewish teacher that set himself up in opposition to him, and refers to the approaching destruction of the Jews by the Romans. And Mr. L'Enfant agrees with this, only explaining it of the learned rabbies of their synagogues. But as the Jewish magistrates, or scribes, were not the only princes in crucifying Christ, (Compare Acts iv. 27,) and as the word αιων, has sometimes undoubtedly a more extensive signification, (compare Rom. xii. 2; Gal. i. 4; Eph. ii. 2; chap. vi. 12; 2 Tim iv. 10; Tit. ii. 12; and even in this epistle, chap. iii. 18, and the next chapter, iv. 4;) and as St. Paul's observation here may so well be applied to Gentile as well as Jewish princes, I saw no reason for limiting the sense, which I never choose to do, without some apparent necessity. On the same principle, I have receded from Mr Locke's interpretation of the next verse.

[g] *From eternal ages.*] To what I have just said of my reasons for not interpreting this of the time of setting up the Jewish œconomy, I must add, that it signifies little, to endeavour to bring such expressions down to any period of time. If it be granted, that they intend any thing previous to the existence of those to whom they refer, the same difficulties will still lie in the way; nor is it possible to avoid them.

[h] *Our* final salvation and *glory.*] L'Enfant explains this of the *glory of the apostles*, in being appointed to publish this revelation; but the sense we have given equally suits the phrase, and is much more sublime and important.

[i] *Not by any means.*] ουκ αν, is an expression which seems to have this force. Compare Luke xxiii. 34.

[k] *As it is written*, &c.] The context in Isa. lxiv. may well be explained, to express *the church's earnest desire of the manifestation of the glories of the Messiah's kingdom;* and I think it more probable, that this is a quotation of those words, with some little variation, than that it refers to a passage said to have been found in an apocryphal book ascribed to

SECT. IV.

1 Cor. II. 9.

ten, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

when the prophet, speaking of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, says, *Eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, what* glorious *things God hath prepared for them that love him.* Nor had the generality of mankind, or even the people who enjoyed the benefit of the Jewish scripture, any just conception of the nature of this sublime plan, and the method by which it was to be accomplished. *But God hath revealed* [*them*] *to us* Christians, and especially to us his apostles, *by* the extraordinary inspiration of *his Spirit*, who intimately and fully knows them: *for the Spirit searcheth* and penetrates *all things, even the deep things of God*, the profoundest mysteries of his counsels, and his gospel. (Compare Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. i. 9; chap. iii. 3, 5, 7.) And well may he be acquainted with all these things; *for who of mankind knoweth the things of a man*, the secret recesses of his mind, on many occasions, and in many circumstances, *unless it be the spirit of a man which is in him*,[1] which knows it by consciousness, to a degree of certainty which no observation or reasoning can produce in another; *so also no one knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God* himself, who is intimately conscious of all, and can conceal, or discover, whatever he pleases.

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might

Now this is entirely to the present purpose; for *the Spirit, which we have received, is not that of the world*, nor do we govern ourselves by those carnal views which engross and enslave so great a part of mankind; *but* we have received, in large and liberal supplies, *that Spirit which is from God*, and which is the noblest of his gifts to the children of men, by which their minds are both informed and regulated; *that* so *we might* both notionally and experimentally

Elijah, (which probably was a forgery of much later date than this time,) where these words are indeed extant, being perhaps transcribed from St. Paul.

[1] *The Spirit of a man.*] I do not apprehend that the distinction between the soul and *spirit*, to which some refer these words, is of great importance in the interpretation of them. They must signify the *perfect acquaintance* with all the Divine schemes and purposes which the *Holy Spirit* has, and which the apostle's argument directly proves, that no creature can have: so that it seems a glorious proof of the deity of the Spirit, and has accordingly been urged as such, by all who have defended that important doctrine.

SECT. IV.

1 Cor. II. 13.

know the things which are freely given us by God: Which we also make it our business to *speak*, and to communicate to others, *not in words dictated by human wisdom*, to excite men's curiosity, amuse their imaginations, or gain their applause; *but in those dictated by the Holy Spirit;*[m] and consequently best adapted to convey such ideas as he would impart, and to impress the hearts and consciences of men, with a reverent and deep sense of those holy mysteries; and this we do with all serious care and attention, *explaining such spiritual* and su-

14 blime *things by spiritual*[n] [*words*,] suggested by him as best adapted to them. *But* in the mean time, vain and foolish men find a great deal in our preaching to cavil at, and object against. And it is no wonder they do; for *the animal man*,[o] who continues under the influence of his appetites and passions, and is a stranger to the noble exercises and principles of the Divine life, *receiveth not*, with any inward relish or sense, *the things of the Spirit of God*, which are too sublime and refined for his low, corrupted and degenerate taste: *for* in proportion to the degree in which *they are* full of Divine wisdom, they will appear *foolishness to him; neither can he* rightly *know* [*them*] whilst he continues in his present state, and under such unhappy prejudices as these: *for they are spiritually discerned*, and a man must have a spiritual taste, formed by the influences of the

15 Holy Spirit upon his heart, before he will thoroughly enter into their excellence. *But the spiritual man*, whose heart, illuminated and sanctified by the Divine Spirit, is set on spiritual and noble objects, *discerneth all things* about him

know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he him-

[m] *Those dictated by the Holy Spirit.*] This expression may certainly convince us of the great regard which we ought always to maintain to the words of scripture; and may especially teach ministers how attentively they should study its beauties, and how careful they should be to make it the support of their discourses.

[n] *Explaining spiritual things, &c.*] This sense of συγκρίνοντες occurs, Gen. xl. 8; and Numb. xv. 34, in the Seventy.

[o] *The animal man.*] Without examining all that the learned and judicious Dr. Owen hath said one way on this text, or Dr. Claget, and Dr. Stebbing another, I have taken that which seems to me the due medium, and for the farther vindication of this exposition, must refer to Clifford, in the 2d volume of the Phœnix, p. 544, and to my third letter to the author of Christianity not founded on Argument, p. 39, 40, only reminding my reader, that this very word ψυχικὸς is rendered *sensual*, Jam. iii. 15; Jude ver 19.

SECT. IV.

1 Cor. II. 15.

self is judged of no man.

rightly, *while he himself is discerned by no man*, by none of those who are most forward and heady in their censures, but remains like a man endowed with sight, among those born blind, who are incapable of apprehending what is clear to him, and amidst their own darkness cannot participate of, nor understand, those beautiful ideas and pleasing sensations which light pours upon him.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

16 And surely, if you consider matters aright, you cannot much wonder at this. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath instructed him*[p]? There must undoubtedly be in the Divine counsels, many secret and hidden things, and a man must have a mind, capacious as that of the blessed God himself, to take upon him to judge of his schemes, and arraign his conduct. *But we*, even I Paul, and my brother apostles, *have the mind of Christ*[q], who is the incarnate wisdom of God himself, and therefore we are not to be called to the bar of those who arrogantly pretend, merely on the foot of human reason, to censure us, as some of your presumptuous teachers do, to their own shame, and the detriment of those that hearken to their suggestions.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 2. LET it be the resolution of every Christian, and especially the determination of every minister, with St Paul, *to know nothing but Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified*; to esteem this the most important of all knowledge, to cultivate it in their own minds and endeavour to propagate it to others. 3 With this Divine science, shall those ministers of the gospel, who knew least of the *excellency of speech* and *the enticing words of man's wisdom*, do more important things for the reformation of the world, and the salvation of souls, than without it, the greatest masters of language, or adepts in philosophy, will ever be able to effect. Let the

p *Who hath instructed him.*] Some good interpreters, and particularly Mr Pyle and Dr Guyse, explain this of the *spiritual man*; but it seems more agreeable to the construction and its connection with what follows by him, to understand God.

q *We have the mind of Christ.*] This part of the epistle is very artificially conducted. He is now aiming at the great point of establishing his authority, which had been suspected amongst them, yet he does not directly prove it, but obliquely insinuate arguments against such suspicions, arguments which might possess their minds before they were aware of what he intended to effect by them. This important remark will often present itself to the attentive reader of St Paul's epistles.

SECT. IV. Verse 6 *princes of this world* boast of the knowledge and refined policy which is so soon to perish, by which so many of their subjects perish, and sometimes themselves before their time. In how many instances does it leave them to imitate the destructive maxims of those, who under pretence of public good, but really under the 8 instigation of the basest private passions, crucified Jesus, the adorable Saviour, the Lord of glory.

May God teach us more of *that hidden wisdom* which they who are truly initiated into real Christianity know, and which opens upon us views and hopes, beyond *what eye hath seen, or ear heard,* 9 *or it hath* particularly and fully *entered into the heart of man* to conceive. There is no need we should distinctly conceive it. It is enough that we know in the general, it is what *God hath prepared for them that love him;* which consideration may surely teach us to trample under our feet that which he so often bestows on them who *hate him,* and are abhorred by him; on those with *whom he is angry every day.*

May that *Spirit, which searcheth all things, even the hidden* 12 *things of God,* give us more deeply and affectionately to *know the things which are freely given us of God,* and to adore that free grace from which we receive them! These things we learn 13 with the highest advantage from the holy scriptures, where they are delivered in words which the Holy Ghost taught: in words therefore, the most admirably adapted to express those spiritual and sublime ideas they were intended to communicate: In which words consequently we learn to speak of the things of God with the exactest propriety and the truest edification.

May we be enabled spiritually to discern them, with whatever 14 contempt they may be treated by natural, that is, by animal men; by those, who, though conceited of their rational powers, can relish little or nothing but what relates to this low and sensual 15 life. Conscious of that inward discerning which discovers all things to us in their true light, even things of infinite importance, may we pity that undiscerning rashness of blind arrogance and pride, with which some who think themselves the wisest in proportion to the degree in which they are the most wretched of mankind, may treat us and not only us, but that gospel which 16 is our glory and our joy. We have the mind of Christ delivered to us by his holy apostles, who were intimately and miraculously instructed in it. Let us humbly receive the oracles they deliver; and whilst others are presuming haughtily to censure them, may we think ourselves happy, if with meek subjection to their unerring authority, we may sit at the feet of such teachers, and regulate our lives by their instructions!

SECT. V.

The apostle reproves the carnality of the Corinthians, in contending about human teachers, and urges many important considerations to cure them of so unbecoming a temper. 1 Cor. III. 1—9.

1 COR. III. 1. AND I, brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hi-

1 CORINTHIANS III. 1.

SECT. V. 1 Cor. III. 1.

I HAVE been speaking of that great plainness with which I addressed myself to you when I came to preach the gospel among you at Corinth; *and I* hope, my *brethren*, you will not despise me for it; for truly, as it became my character as an apostle of Christ, so it suited yours, as being under the power of prejudices, which so far prevailed, that even when you were converted to the profession of Christianity, I *could not speak unto you as unto spiritual* persons, who had made any attainments in religion, proportionable to the illuminations and influences of the Spirit, which you had received: *but* was obliged in many instances to address you, *as* those who were still in too great a measure, *carnal* in your temper and views, and therefore were but *as babes in Christ*,[a] and beginners in the Divine life. I might have said sublimer things, and in a more elevated manner; but found so much pride and faction among you, that it was necessary to insist much upon the plain and fundamental doctrines of the cross, rather than on things, which, if they might have suited your inclinations better, would have suited your circumstances less. 2 *I* was forced to preach to you, as to persons weak as infants; and so *feed you with milk*,[b] which I did as it were pour into your mouths with a tenderness, like that of a mother, or a nurse, when feeding her sucking child; *and* could *not* conveniently feed you with *strong meat*. I waved discoursing

[a] *Babes in Christ.*] By explaining this of *beginners in the Divine life*, or such as had made but little proficiency in it, we reconcile this with those passages which speak of the eminency of their gifts. 1 Cor. i. 5; 2 Cor. viii. 7.

[b] *Feed you with milk.*] The word ἐπότισα exactly signifies, *I give you to drink*; but as that rendering would not suit the other word with which it is connected, *strong meat*, I thought it best to retain our version. Parallel instances to this manner of expression are produced by Mr Blackwall, in his Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 72.

SECT. V.

1 Cor. III. 2.

on some of those doctrines which left room for the curiosities of sublimer speculation, and admitted of the greatest ornaments of discourse,[c] *because ye were not* then *able* [*to bear it*] *nor* indeed *are ye yet able*; as I perceive by the account which our brethren give of your present state.

3 *For* it evidently appears, by what I hinted above, that *ye are yet carnal*, still under the influence of weak, and indeed sinful, prejudices. I appeal to your own consciences on this occasion *for* the proof of this: *while* [*there is*] *emulation, and contention, and factions among you, are you not* indeed *carnal? and do ye not walk* and conduct yourselves, *as* unregenerate *men* do? So that by this behaviour, a stranger would not know that you were Christians, or see any thing in you above uninstructed and unsanctified nature.

4 *For when* you eagerly contend about the honours of this or that teacher, and set him up as the head of a distinguishing party; so that *one says I am for Paul, and another I am for Apollos*,[d] I admire the sublime sentiments of the one, and the fine language and address of the other; *are ye not carnal?* and do ye not talk in the spirit of your heathen neighbours, who have their favourite philosophers and orators too? And is this language for Christians?

5 *Who then is Paul? and who* [*is*] *Apollos?* For what reason do ye regard either the one or the other? Is it for no consideration *but* that of talents, which they have in common with many who are strangers to the gospel? Or ought it not rather to be in a different view? even because they are the *ministers* of Christ, *by whose means you have* been instructed in his

therto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal; for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I *am* of Apollos, are ye not carnal?

5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed,

[c] Ornaments of discourse.] If any think that the use of them might have been a proper condescension to their weakness, it is to be remembered that the emulation of eloquence so ready to prevail among them, might have rendered such an indulgence dangerous.

[d] *I for Apollos.*] Mr. Locke fancies (comparing chap. iv. 6,) that by Apollos, Paul means that Jewish teacher who was set up in opposition to him and came among them, after he had preached the gospel to them; but it seems much more probable to me, especially from the text just referred to, that he chose this name, that he might give no offence, and to shew that he should lament and condemn any division among them, though it were in favour of himself, or the dearest friend he had in the world. I cannot think St Paul would have described the false apostle, if there were any one person who might be so called, as watering his plantation, which he rather wasted; or have spoken of himself, and that messenger of Satan, as one; as he does verse 8.

SECT. V.

1 Cor. III. 5.

even as the Lord gave to every man?

religion, and under whose teachings ye have *believed* and embraced it; and because they have humbly attempted to do their part for this great purpose, *even as the Lord gave to every man* both furniture and success.

6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

6 *I have planted a* Christian church among you; *Apollos has* since *watered* it by his affecting and useful addresses, (Acts xviii. 27,) *but* it was *God* who *gave the increase*, and caused the plantation thus watered to grow: no labourer can make his seed spring up without the influence of heaven, sunshine, and rain.

7 So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

7 When you come *therefore* to compare our part with that of God, it appeareth even as nothing, in the comparison. We freely own, that how highly soever you may think of us, *he that planteth is nothing* at all, *and he that watereth; but God, who* by his efficacious Spirit and grace *giveth the increase*, is all in all.

8 Now he that planteth, and he that watereth, are one: and every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.

8 *But as* for this opposition which you make between us, and this zeal with which you contend for one against another, it is altogether unreasonable and absurd: for *he that planteth, and he that watereth, are one*[c]; we are united in interest, *and* united in design and affection; so that instead of being pleased, we are rather displeased and grieved, with these invidious comparisons in favour of either. Our great concern is, to please our great Lord, to whom we are shortly to give up our account, and from whom *we shall receive, every one his own* proper *reward according to his own labour*, and not according to the prejudices of our fellow-servants either for, or against us.

9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's

9 *For we* are not lords and proprietors of the church, nor persons that have independent schemes of our own to carry on; but we *are the fellow-labourers of God*[f], the great Master of the family. *Ye are the*

[c] *Are one.*] This is, (as Mr. Cradock well observes, in his Apost. Hist. p. 156,) another cogent argument against divisions: that, though their labours were different, and their rewards proportionable, yet they had in the general *one office*, and were employed as *workers together by God*, to plant the seeds of grace and holiness in the souls of men, and to bring them on to perfection. He here introduces an excellent discourse, of the happy consequences of the faithfulness in the ministerial work, and the awful account of it to be given up to God. A subject familiar to his own mind; and so proper for their teachers, that if it render the epistle something less regular, it balances the account by rendering it much more useful.

[f] *The fellow labourers of God.*] This is the exact import of συνεργοι Θεου which our version renders, *labourers together with God:* an improper rendering on every account.

SECT. V.

1 Cor. III. 9.

husbandry of God, which we are to cultivate, that ye may bring forth fruit for him. [*Ye are*] *the building of God*, which we are to endeavour to advance; that he may dwell in you, as in his holy temple, and glorify his name among you.

husbandry, *ye are* God's building.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1 WHO that wishes the welfare of the church of Christ, must not lament those sad remainders of carnality which are often to be found among them who have the greatest advantage for becoming spiritual; while the same contentious principles, fermented, no doubt, by the same malignant enemy of the whole body, breathe in so many of its members, and diffuse a kind of poison, 3 which at once swells and torments it! What envyings, and strife, and factions, among those who ought to join as brethren, and to know but one interest! What a desire, in many instances, to increase the burdens of each other, instead of bearing them with friendly sympathy!

4 May Christians be cured of this dishonourable and fatal attachment to distinguished parties, and human names! May ministers feel more of that generous and noble spirit which this great apostle expresses! His reasoning hath the same force still. Ministers are still intended to be only the instruments of producing and establishing faith in their hearers, and still depend, as entirely as 5, 6, 7 ever, upon the blessing of God to give the increase to their labours. To that may they daily look; and be sensible that they are nothing without it; and that with it, their part is so small, that they hardly deserve to be mentioned. May their hands and hearts be more united; and retaining a due sense of the honour 9 which God doth them, in employing them in his vineyard, and in his building, may they faithfully labour, not as for themselves, but for the great Proprietor, and till the day come, when he 8 will remember them in full proportion to their fidelity and diligence.

SECT. VI.

As a useful lesson both to teachers and private Christians, in the present state of the Corinthian church, the Apostle reminds them of that great trial which every man's work was to undergo, the great guilt of defiling God's temple, the vanity of human wisdom in the sight of God, and the great happiness of the true believer

in that universal grant which God had made him of every thing necessary to his welfare. 1 Cor. III. 10, *to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS III. 10.

1 COR. III. 10. ACCORDING to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

SECT. VI.

1 Cor. III. 10.

I HAVE spoken of you as God's building; and in that view have the pleasure to say, that in my first preaching amongst you, when you were entire strangers to the first principles of the gospel, *according to* the measure of *the grace of God given to me*; to which I desire to refer the honour of all that I am, and of all that I do, in this excellent work; *I* have been enabled to act *in the character of a skilful architect*, or master-builder: for with all due care and application, *have I laid the* great *foundation*, which hath strength sufficient to bear all the stress even of our eternal hopes. *And* one, and *another*, whom God calls to labour among you, *buildeth thereon*, for the further edification of your church, and of the souls of its particular members: *but let every one* carefully *see to it, how he buildeth thereon*, and what superstructure he raises.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

11 This is all indeed that remains to be done: *for other* solid *foundation no one is able to lay, beside what is* already *laid, which is Jesus Christ*[a], the great foundation-stone, which God hath laid in Zion, elect and precious; and I take it for granted, no one who calls himself a Christian will attempt to lay any other.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble:

12 *If any man build*, I say, *upon this foundation*, let him look to the materials and nature of his work; whether he raise a stately and magnificent temple upon it, adorned as it were, like the house of God at Jerusalem, with *gold* and *silver*, [*and*] large, beautiful, and *costly stones*; [*or*] a mean hovel, consisting of nothing better than planks of *wood*, roughly put together, and thatched with *hay* [*and*] *stubble*; that is, let him look to it, whether he teach the substantial vital truths which do indeed belong to Christianity, and which it was intended to support and illustrate; or set himself to propagate vain subtleties and conceits on the one hand, or legal rites and Jewish traditions on the other; which, though they do

[a] *Which is Jesus Christ.*] L'Enfant would render it, *even this, that Jesus is the Christ*; but I think the sense given in our text much nobler.

SECT. VI.

1 Cor. III. 13.

not absolutely destroy the foundation, disgrace it, as a mean edifice would do a grand and expensive foundation, laid with great pomp and solemnity. But to prevent this, let me seriously admonish you, that whatever any man's work may be, and however it may be covered, and as it were hid behind the scaffolding, *every one's work shall* ere long *be made manifest. For the* great *day*, which is approaching, *shall lay it open, because it shall* then *be* as it were *discovered by fire; yea, the fire* of that great day of general conflagration, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, *shall prove every man's work of* 14 *what kind it is*[b]. It shall stand a severe examination, which will as soon expose the vanity of many things, which some admired preachers value themselves upon, and for which they are extolled by their hearers, as the flame of some mighty burning shews the difference between the stability of a straw roof and a marble wall. And then *if any man's superstructure abide* the test, and be approved, he will not only have the comfort of it in his own mind, which is an immediate and permanent satisfaction; but *he shall* also *receive a* glorious *reward* from Christ, the great Head of the church, and proprietor of the building, in comparison of which the applauses of men, or any thing they can bestow, deserve not to be mentioned by the name of a 15 reward. *But if any man's work be* then *burnt* up; if on that trial it be found like the combustible and mean materials which I represented by the wood, the hay, and the stubble; the consequence is, that *he will sustain a* proportionable *loss*[c]. He will find he has been spending

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest. For the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

15 If any man's work shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss;

[b] *The day shall prove every man's work.*] It is so very unnatural, with Dr. Whitby, to interpret this of the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, or of any approaching persecutions of the Christian church, that one cannot but wonder, that critics of character have adopted such a sense.

[c] *Sustain a proportionable loss.*] I cannot but fear that an application to such niceties of unprofitable learning, as those, in which some, who have the charge of souls, spend almost the whole of their time, to the neglect of the vitals of Christianity, will be found in this day, lost labour. Though such as employ themselves chiefly to inculcate in their preaching, *doctrines, ceremonies,* or *forms of human invention*, come nearer the case immediately referred to here.—L'Enfant refers this *loss* to the reproach and shame which such shall suffer before the tribunal of Christ.

but he himself shall be saved; yet so, as by fire.

his time and strength to little purpose, and has lost a great deal of that reward which he might, through Divine grace, have secured, had he applied himself with vigour and zeal to the proper labours of a gospel-minister. *Yet*, if he be upon the whole a good man, who hath built upon Christ as the foundation, and, on the terms of the gospel, committed his soul to him, *he shall himself be saved*, and find mercy of the Lord; *though* in comparison with that more abundant entrance into his kingdom which others will have, it may be said, that he is saved with extreme difficulty, and *as* a man whose house is in flames while he is in it, and who is therefore forced with great terror to escape *through the fire*,[d] sustaining the loss of every thing but his life.

16 Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

16 Again, before I dismiss this topic of your being the building of God, let me lead you into some farther reflections, and ask you seriously, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?*[e] that the whole body of Christian converts is dedicated to his peculiar service, *and* honoured by his most gracious presence, as *the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*, and you thereby appear to be consecrated to himself? Now *if any one* defile, 17

17 If any man de-

[d] *Through the fire.*] To be as *a brand plucked out of the burning*, is well known, as a proverbial expression, to signify a narrow escape from extreme danger. Compare Zec. iii. 2; Amos iv. 11; and especially Isa. xxxiii. 11, 12; to which some have thought the apostle here alludes. Δια πυρος, (Jude 23,) is put for passing *through the fire*, as δι' ὑδατος, (1 Pet. iii. 20,) signifies to be saved from the *water*, by passing *through it*, as the ark did. The learned Elsner, who urges and illustrates these instances, shews, that the most approved heathen writers use the phrase in this sense. (Observ. Vol. II. p. 78.) Many divines have well shewn how far this text is from giving any support to a popish purgatory. And though Mr. Fleming follows many of the ancient fathers, in explaining it of some terror, or pain, which Christians of very imperfect character may be exposed to, when they rise, (as he supposes they will,) amidst the flames of the last conflagration, (Flem. First Resur. p. 44,) the text will admit so fair a sense on the interpretation here given, that I cannot persuade myself from hence, without farther evidence, that numbers of holy souls, who have long been glorified in heaven, will be re-united to their bodies, which are to be raised in glory, to be in the first moments of that union *terrified* and *tormented*; though it should be but for ever so short a time. That the Pagans, as well as some of the Fathers, had a notion of some such purgatory, Elsner has shewn in the passage cited above.

[e] *You are the temple of God.*] Elsner hath many passages here, from Philo, Plato, and other writers in which they represent a virtuous mind as the *temple of God*, and in which heathens speak in the highest and strongest terms, of the obligations men are under to keep his temples *inviolate* and *unpolluted*. And if, as Mr. Locke supposes, Paul's chief opposer was a Jew, the vast veneration he would of course have for the temple at Jerusalem, would add great weight to this argument with respect to him and his followers.

SECT. VI.

1 Cor. III. 17.

or *destroy the temple of God*, it may well be apprehended, that *God*, ever jealous of his own honour, *will destroy him.* And you may assure yourselves from this view, that whatever preaching, or whatever conduct, tends to diminish its purity and glory, will be very severely resented by him; even much more than the violation of the place, (great as that impiety and provocation was,) where he so long caused his name to dwell upon mount Zion. *For the temple of God*, considered as such, *is* undoubtedly *holy*, and awful. Much more then must that be so, which he hath erected by his grace in the breasts of intelligent creatures, and sanctified to himself, as the everlasting residence of his peculiar complacency. (Compare Isa. lvii. 15; chap. lxvi. 1, 2.) *Now ye are this* [*temple;*] each of you, if a true Christian, is such a sacred shrine, and the whole Christian church the complete and magnificent building. It therefore becomes every member of it, to be very careful how he behaves, and what he teaches among you; lest he should commit an evil, of the enormity of which he may not be immediately aware.

file the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which *temple* ye are.

18 I know there are those among you whose pride and self-conceit may lead them to despise this admonition, especially as coming from me; but *let no man deceive himself* with vain speculations of his own worth and abilities. *If any one of you seem to be wise in this world*, if he value himself upon what is commonly called wisdom among Jews or Gentiles, *let him become a fool, that he may be wise* indeed. Let him humbly acknowledge his own natural ignorance and folly, and embrace that gospel which the wisdom of the world proudly and vainly derides as foolishness, if he desire to approve himself really and substantially wise, and to reap at last the honours and rewards of those who are truly

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 so in the sight of God. *For* all *the* boasted *wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*, who with one glance sees through all its vanity; *as it is written*, (Job v. 13,) *He entangleth the wise in their own* crafty *artifice*, often ruining them by those designs which they had formed with the utmost efforts of human policy, and were

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written he taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

20 most intent upon executing. *And again*, it

20 And again

1 Cor. III. 20.

The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

is said elsewhere, (Psal. xciv. 11.) *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.* He sees how they ensnare themselves in their own subtleties, and when they think themselves most sagacious, are only amused with their own sophistry and deceit.

21 Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are your's:

21 *Therefore,* upon the whole, (that I may return to the point from whence I set out,) considering all I have said, and especially considering in what view the great God regards these things which we are so ready to value ourselves upon; *let none glory in men,* or divide themselves into parties, out of attachment to this or that teacher. *For all things are your's,* and we in particular, are to be regarded, not as your lords and commanders, that you should list under our banners; but rather as your servants. I except not myself, or the most honoured

22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are your's:

22 among my brethren; *whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas,* be in question, we are all equally your's, to serve you to the utmost of our abilities, in the advancement of your best interests. Yea, I may go farther, and say, *whether* we speak of *the world,* God will give you so much of it as shall be for your real good; and indeed he supports its whole frame in a great measure for your sakes; *or* if we survey *life,* in all its various conditions, *or death,* and all its solemn harbingers and attendants, God will make the one, *or* the other, in different views advantageous to you, and will adjust the circumstances of both with the kindest regard to your happiness. *Things present, or future,* the comforts and privileges of this life on the one hand, or its afflictions and troubles on the other, and at length, the boundless felicity of the eternal state, where affliction and trouble shall be no more known; *all are,* through the Divine grace, *your's.* Remember this, and let the thought raise your minds above these little things which now occasion such contention between you; and be united in love, as God hath united you in privileges and hopes.

23 And ye are

23 *And* bear in mind too, as the counterpart of this happy detail, that *ye are Christ's;* his property, his subjects, his people; and let that engage you to

SECT. VI.

1 Cor. III. 23.

attend to his royal law of charity,[f] by which you may be peculiarly known to be his. *And* as *Christ* [*is*] *God's*, and refers all his services as a Mediator, to his Father's glory, it will most effectually promote that great end of his appearance, that you should learn such a subjection of soul to him, and imbibe those candid and generous sentiments which I am labouring to produce and cherish in your minds.

Christ's; and Christ is God's.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 21, 23 WITH what delight may the Christian survey this grand inventory, and, conscious that he is Christ's, call *all things his own!* With what pleasure survey the various gifts and graces of ministers, and consider them as given by God for his edification! With what complacency look round on *things present*, and forward on *things to come*, in this connection, and call, *the world* his own; and count not only *life*, but *death*, amongst his treasures! Both in their different aspects, are subservient to the happy purpose of glorifying God: and surely, when by death we may do it more effectually, death should be more welcome than life. And welcome it must indeed be to every believer, as the appointed means of transmitting him to the sight and enjoyment of God, and the possession of better blessings, than Paul, or Apollos, could ever describe, or any *thing present*, or *any thing to come* in this world, could ever afford.

Let these sublime views elevate the Christian above those occasions of contention, which, for want of ascending to such noble contemplations, are often the source of innumerable evils. And let us add to them that other consideration, that *we are the* 16, 17 *temples of the Holy Ghost;* if Christians indeed, we are inhabited by God, *even by his Spirit.* Let this engage us to take the strictest care, neither to defile ourselves, nor to injure our brethren; lest in either view, it should be resented and punished by the holy God, as a sacrilegious profanation.

19 Let us not overvalue the *wisdom of this world*, since it is little regarded by God; nor be greatly concerned, if fools account our wisdom, folly, and our life, madness. So censured they the prophets and apostles, before us; nor did our Master himself escape the calumny and outrage. We shall be happy enough,

[f] Royal law of charity.] Nothing could have a greater efficacy to put an end to the contention, so prevalent among the Christians at Corinth, than the consideration of those high privileges and hopes which were common to them all, as it would tend to sweeten their spirits, and inspire them with honourable and affectionate sentiments with respect to their brethren.

if we approve our fidelity to him, and if we build a wise superstructure on Christ, as the great, the only Foundation.

SECT. VI.

Let his ministers especially, be solicitous, that they may not lose the labour of their lives, by choosing unhappily to employ them, in that which will turn to no account, in the great day of his appearing. Let them carefully examine their materials. Surely if they have senses spiritually exercised, it cannot be hard to distinguish between the substantial and undoubted doctrines of Christianity, which are as *gold, and silver, and precious stones,* and those fictitious, or at best, dubious and intricate points, which in comparison with the former, are *but wood, and hay, and stubble.* And if in urging these, they passionately inveigh against their brethren, and endeavour to bring them into contempt, or suspicion, what do they but cement these combustible materials with sulphur.

Verse 10, 11

12-15

O! let the frequent views of that last searching fire, that *grand period of all,* be much in our thoughts: that day, when not only the works of ministers, but every private person, must, as it were, pass through the flames. May we then be *saved,* not with difficulty, but with praise and honour! May our works, of what kind soever they are, abide, so as to be found worthy of applause, and through Divine grace receive a distinguished reward.

13

SECT. VII.

To lay in a farther remedy against the pride and faction so ready to prevail among the Corinthians, the apostle leads them into several useful reflections on the nature of the ministerial office, the final judgment of him who searcheth all hearts, and the obligations they were under to the Divine goodness, for every advantage by which they were distinguished from others. 1 Cor. IV. 1—7.

1 COR. IV. 1.

LET a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards

1 CORINTHIANS IV. 1.

I HAVE told you, how rich and happy you are in the Divine donation, in consequence of which all things are yours; and particularly, Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, with their various gifts and endowments. Learn therefore to form your estimate of us aright; and *let a man so account of us,* not as the masters of the church, but *as the servants of Christ,* who are in obedience to his commands, to wait on his family; esteeming it honour *and* happiness enough, if we approve ourselves as *stewards of*

SECT. VII.

1 Cor. IV. 1.

SECT. VII. 1 Cor. IV. 1.

the mysteries of God; as persons whose business it is, with the sincerest regard to his glory, to dispense that gospel which contains such sublime truths, for so many ages concealed from the knowledge of the world. And *as for what remains* to be done, in the discharge of this office, I hope we shall always remember, that *it is demanded in stewards, that a man be found faithful*; since they also, as well as lower servants in the family, are subject to account. And accordingly it is my highest ambition, that my great Master may judge me faithful, whether my fellow-servants be pleased, or displeased, with my conduct. And if my fidelity to my Lord may offend them, which is a very supposable case, I am well contented to abide all its consequences. *For* I will freely declare in this view, *it is with me the smallest thing that can be* imagined, *that I should be judged by you*, dear as you are to me, *or by any man's judgment*; his day will so soon be over; his censures can effect so little, that amidst the great prospects I have before me, it seems scarce to deserve a mention. *Nor* indeed *do I* so *judge myself*, as if my case were finally to be determined by my own apprehensions concerning it. *For* though I bless God, *I am not conscious to myself of any thing* criminal, of any designed neglect of my office, or unfaithfulness in my trust, *yet am I not hereby justified*[a]: that is not the main thing in question; I know partiality to ourselves may often lead us to overlook many faults, for which God may another day condemn us. *But he that judgeth me*, the Person by whose judgment I am to stand, or fall, *is the Lord* Jesus Christ, who searcheth the hearts, and trieth the reins of the children of men. *Therefore* be strictly careful that ye *judge nothing before the* appointed *time*, that is, *until* he, *the* great *Lord* of all, *shall come*, *who shall* pluck off the mask of every artful hypocrite, how high soever he may bear himself in the Christian church; shall *bring*

of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self.

4 For I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the

[a] *Yet am I not hereby justified.*] This seems a gentle, but a very affecting insinuation, that his opponents, confident as they might seem in their own integrity and safety, would do well to take greater heed, that they were not imposed upon by the deceitfulness of their own hearts.

hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

to light the hidden things of darkness[b], *and* shall *manifest* all *the* secret *counsels of the hearts*[c]. *And then shall every one have* in the most public manner, that *praise from God* before the assembled world, which is proportionable to his real character and conduct.

6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself, and *to* Apollos, for your sakes: that ye might learn in us not to think *of men*, above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.

6 *These things, brethren, I have by a* very obvious *figure transferred to myself, and* [*to*] *Apollos*[d]; mentioning our names, and that of Cephas only, instead of many more, since you know the entire friendship there is among us, and how far the names of most about whom you contend, are inferior to these. And I have done this, not on our own account, as you may easily apprehend, but *for your sakes, that you may learn, in* attending to what has been said concerning *us*, distinguished as we are by our office, furniture, and success, *not to entertain too high an opinion of yourselves*, or others whom you are most ready to admire, *above what is* here *written*[e], and appears reasonable on the principles which have been laid down: *that you may not be puffed up for one* teacher, and *against another*, which surely you cannot allow with respect to other teachers, when you see us renouncing all such attachment to ourselves.

7 For who maketh

7 And indeed this would be very unreasonable, if the distinctions were as great, as

[b] *Bring to light the hidden things of darkness.*] This is a lively and just insinuation, that under specious forms, his enemies concealed very dark designs, which would not bear the discoveries of that awful day.

[c] *Manifest all the* secret *counsels of the hearts.*] This passage also suggests a very solid argument against magnifying one minister above another, namely, that the secret principles of men's actions are unknown; and it is enlarged upon to very good practical purposes; while the apostle, at the same time, takes an opportunity of making a very solemn profession of his own faithfulness, and shewing the boldness he had towards God, and his modesty and candour to men; all which were extremely suitable to the general purposes he had in view.

[d] *Transferred to myself, &c.*] Some, and particularly Mr. Locke, have inferred from hence, that not St. Paul and Apollos, but some other persons, were set up among the Corinthians for heads of parties, for whose names the apostle substituted his own, and that of his most intimate friend; but the learned and judicious Witsius well observes, (Meletem. p. 104.) that it is probable their names were used among some others omitted, and the figure was only this, that the names of St. Paul and Apollos were used to signify themselves, and any others so extolled, and when the apostle would say, how little ministers were in themselves, he chose, out of humility and prudence, rather to take such freedom with himself and his most particular and intimate friend, than with others.

[e] *What is here written.*] Elsner (Observ. Vol. II. p. 85,) confirms this interpretation, and produces many instances in which φρονειν is used to express, *having too high an opinion of one's self.* L'Enfant explains it in something of a different sense, "*above what scripture warrants.*"

SECT. VII.

1 Cor. IV. 5.

you, or they, who have the highest conceit of themselves, can imagine. *For* allowing all, that self-love and prepossession can wish, let me ask the man who carries it to the greatest height, *Who maketh thee to differ* [*from another*,] in any furniture, or attainment, whether intellectual or moral[f]? *And what hast thou* of any kind, *which thou didst not receive* from God, the great Parent of universal good? *But if thou hast received* [*it*] all from him, *why dost thou boast* in the gift of his liberal goodness, *as if thou hadst not received* [*it*] from him: but it were originally and essentially thine own? Would you all but seriously reflect upon this, it would teach you humbler sentiments, much more rational in themselves, and on the whole, much more for your credit, as well as comfort.

thee to differ *from another?* and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received *it?*

IMPROVEMENT.

NOTHING can be more conducive to the advantage of Christianity, and by consequence, of the world, whose happiness is so much concerned in its support and success, than that its preachers should consider, and their hearers remember, the nature of their office. They are not *lords over God's household* (Verse 1) and *heritage*, but *ministers of Christ*, whose business it is to promote their Master's honour; (2) *stewards of his mysteries*, who are to endeavour both to keep and to dispense them with all good fidelity. From their Master therefore may they take all their instructions, and to him let them refer all their administrations. Various judgments will be passed upon them; and they, who will oppose the attempts of some of their brethren to introduce corruption and confusion into his family, will have many an unkind reflection thrown upon them, and experience the severity of censure, for a conduct which merits the justest approbation. But

[f] Whether intellectual, or moral.] I include moral attainments, because the apostle had, in the preceding verses, been speaking of fidelity in the ministry, and he elsewhere in this epistle speaks of *obtaining mercy to be faithful*, (chap. vii. 25.) and would be understood, as referring not only to his giving us our faculties, but exciting us to the right use of them, both by external calls and advantages, and by inward impressions of his grace on the heart; though still in a manner suited to our free and rational natures, and which, however, some may be distinguished by them, leaves all who chuse wrong, without excuse, and admits the exercise of justice, as well as grace, in the final distributions of good and evil. See the paraphrase on chap. iii. 7, which seems very applicable to this clause. Yet as it is certain, the Corinthians chiefly gloried in their gifts, and in those of their favourite teachers, I doubt not but it is to these that the apostle chiefly refers in this place, and cannot think that the stress of the controversy relating to the sanctifying influences of Divine grace, does by any means rest on this passage.

let them learn by this excellent apostle, to be above the judgment of men, and to keep the judgment of the Lord in view; that they may not only be supported under that petulance of their fellow-servants, but may learn to guard against, what is much more dangerous, the treachery of their own hearts, and the flattery of self-love; lest they fondly mistake the voice of prejudice for that of conscience, or in other words, the voice of an erroneous conscience, for that of a conscience well informed. Verse 3.

Let us often recollect the narrow limits of our own knowledge, 4 that we may learn modesty in our censures of each other. He only can judge, *who knoweth the heart;* and there is a day approaching, which will *manifest all its secrets.* While others, 5, &c. with a pitiable mixture of arrogance, and ignorance, *judge one another*, and *judge us*, let us rather be concerned that we may secure that *praise of God*, which will be heard and felt by the soul, with the highest rapture, and will silence every echo of human applause, or censure.

To conclude: if it hath pleased God, in any respect, to distin- 7 guish us from others, by the gifts or graces which he hath bestowed upon us, let us humbly trace these distinctions to their true source: and instead of indulging the least degree of pride on their account, let us rather be the more humble. For surely the more we receive from God the more we are indebted and obliged; and the more we are obliged to the Divine goodness, the greater ought our shame and confusion to be, that we have not answered those obligations by more faithful care, and more constant gratitude.

SECT. VIII.

The Apostle, in order to gain farther upon their affections, represents the many hardships and dangers, to which he and his brethren were exposed, in comparison of that easy state in which the Corinthians were; and reminding them at the same time of their particular obligations to him, he warns them not to force him on severities, to the use of which he was very averse. 1 Cor. IV. 8, *to the end.*

1 COR. IV. 8.

NOW ye are full,

1 CORINTHIANS IV. 8.

I HAVE suggested some humbling thoughts to your consideration; but I fear you will have little relish for them, as you seem to indulge yourselves in very different views. Am I not rather to congratulate Christians, whose rank and figure in the world is so much superior to that of many of the brethren, and even of their

SECT. VIII.

1 Cor. IV. 8.

first apostle too? For *now you are full; now you are rich;* you enjoy so great a degree of prosperity and plenty, that methinks *you have even reigned as kings without us:*[a] so happy in a variety of secular enjoyments, that you have hardly missed my company. *And* indeed *I wish you did reign,* in the truest and noblest sense, and were altogether as happy as you think yourselves. I wish the most excellent powers of the human nature had, through divine grace, greater rule and sovereignty in your souls, *that we,* in the midst of all our present distress, *might also reign with you,* and partake of your happiness, in that high degree, in which, if it were sincere and solid, our affection for you would enable us to share it. And surely we sufficiently

9 need such consolation as this; *for I think God hath exhibited us, the apostles* of his Son, like those gladiators which are brought out on the stage *last* of all, *as appointed to* certain *death,*[b] and therefore not furnished with weapons of defence, nor allowed so much as a chance of escaping: *for we are* produced, as it were, on a public theatre, and *made a spectacle to the* whole *world* of rational creatures, both *to angels and men,*[c] who are all held in solicitous at-

now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you.

9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death. For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

[a] *You have reigned as kings,* &c.] This is a proverbial expression of the most splendid and plentiful circumstances; and some think, when the apostle adds, *I wish ye did reign,* he means, "I wish "you had the authority of princes, "that ye might shelter and accommo- "date us amidst all our distresses and "afflictions." But one can hardly think he did indeed wish each of them a prince, or the civil power in their hands. It seems much more probable, that as spiritual objects were so familiar to his mind, he changes the idea in the manner the paraphrase expresses; in which sense it seems that Christians are called *priests and kings,* (Rev. i. 6;) as it is certain they are called *a royal priesthood.* (1 Pet. ii. 9.)—I cannot think with Mr. L'Enfant, that this refers peculiarly to the factious pastors of the church at Corinth.

[b] *Last of all.*] I cannot think, as Elsner seems to do, that the word ἐσχάτοι, refers to the *low rank* which the apostle held in secular life; or with Messieurs Calvin, Locke, and L'Enfant, that St. Paul speaks of himself as the *last called apostle;* but that there is a reference to the Roman custom of bringing forth those persons on the theatre on the after-part of the day, either to fight with each other, or with wild beasts, who were appointed to certain death, and had not that poor chance of escaping which those brought forth in the morning had. Compare Sen. Epist. Cap. vii. Reeves Apol. Vol. I. p. 237. Such kind of spectacles were so common in all the provinces, that it is no wonder we should find such an allusion here. The word ἀπέδειξεν, *exhibited,* and θέατρον, *a spectacle on the theatre,* have in this connection a beautiful propriety. The whole passage is indeed full of high eloquence, and finely adapted to move their compassion in favour of those who were so generously exposing and sacrificing themselves for the public good.

[c] *A spectacle to—angels and men.*] This representation is wonderfully pathetic and sublime: while they considered evil angels and men as beholding them with all the malignant, and good angels and men with all the benevolent passions, it must

10 We *are* fools for Christ's sake, but ye *are* wise in Christ: we *are* weak, but ye *are* strong: ye *are* honourable, but we *are* despised.

tention to so strange and tragical a sight. Imagine not, that I have aggravated the representation; the more you attend to our circumstances, the more you will discern its justice: for *we* [*are*] treated like *fools*, babblers, and madmen, *for the sake of Christ*, (Acts xvii. 18; chap. xxvi. 24.) as if we were the weakest and most ignorant of mankind, because we preach the plain truths of the gospel, and endeavour to the utmost to exalt our Lord. *But ye* [*are*] *wise in Christ:* ye set up for a kind of Christian philosophers, of more refined understandings than your brethren, and think you have found out a political way, at once of securing the blessings of the gospel, and escaping its inconveniencies and persecutions. *We* [*are*] *weak*, in presence, in infirmities, and in sufferings: *but ye* [*are*] *strong*, have great confidence in yourselves, and are got above many of those tender alarms and impressions which hearts like ours are subject to, on a variety of occasions: *you* [*are*] *honourable*, adorned with extraordinary gifts, in which you are ready to glory, and many of you set off with circumstances of external distinction; *but we* [*are*] poor *despised* creatures, treated with contempt wherever we come.

11 Even unto this present hour, we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and

11 For *even to this present hour*, after all the battles fought, and all the conquests already gained, by the gospel, we are often exposed to circumstances of the extremest want and misery. Sometimes *we both hunger and thirst*, and amidst our charitable journies to diffuse the gospel, hardly find entertainment of the plainest kind, to relieve our necessities, or money to purchase it. *And* our clothes are so worn out with travelling, and we are so ill furnished for buying more, that we *are* often almost *naked*,[d] not having decent raiment to wear, though we appear so often in public assemblies. *And* in many instances,

have a great tendency to inspire their minds with the most heroic sentiments.—Elsner has given an excellent collection of passages from heathen writers, in which such a figure is made use of by them.

[d] *Are naked*, &c.] Surely one cannot imagine any more glorious triumph of the truth, than what it gained in these circumstances, when St. Paul, with an impediment in his speech, and a personage, rather contemptible, than graceful, appeared in a mean, and perhaps sometimes tattered dress, before persons of the highest rank, and yet commanded such attention, and made such impressions.

SECT. VIII.

1 Cor. IV. 11.

where our benevolent and important message is heard, instead of being received with due respect, we *are* insulted and perhaps *buffeted*, by the unruly and barbarous mob; *and* at best, if we now and then meet with a little more hospitable usage, it is for a very little while; for, whereas you dwell in a rich and magnificent city, we *have no certain abode*, but are continually removing from one place to another.

12 *And* though we are engaged in a work of so great importance to the souls of men, which might well ingross all our time and care; yet such are the circumstances in which we are often placed, that we are obliged in duty and prudence, to *labour* in some secular calling, *working with our own hands*, to procure the necessary supports of the most frugal and parsimonious life. *Being* in the most insolent and provoking manner *reviled* to our faces, and loaded with every opprobrious name of contempt, *we* meekly *bless*, and pray for our enemies; *being persecuted, we endure it* patiently,

13 unable to right and help ourselves. *Being blasphemed*, and spoken of in the most scandalous, and, considering our sacred character, the most impious terms; *we* only *intreat* that men would more impartially examine our pretensions, that they may entertain more favourable sentiments concerning us; and in the mean time, we freely forgive them their rash and injurious censures. And on the whole, such is the usage we meet with, that *we are made* and treated *like the* very *filth of the world*,[e] like the wretches, which being taken from the dregs of the people, are offered as expiatory sacrifices to

are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place;

12 And labour, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it;

13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, *and are*

e *Filth of the world.*] The word καθαρματα has a force and meaning here which no one word in our language can express; I have given what I am persuaded is the true meaning of it in the paraphrase, and must refer to Dr. Hen. More, (Theol. Works, p. 63.) and Dr. Whitby in loc. for the illustration of this bold and noble figure. Suidas says that these wretched victims were called καθαρματα, as their death was esteemed an *expiation*; and he tells us the word περιψηματα, which we render *off-scouring*, was also applied to them; and Bos, (Exercit. p. 125.) illustrates this sense of the word by a very large and judicious collection of Greek quotations. See also Dr. Ridley's Christian Passover, p. 22. It appears from some of these passages, that when the ashes of these unhappy men were thrown into the sea, these very words were used in the ceremony, γινυ περιψημα. γινυ καθαρμα; but the former of these titles was given them, in reference to that original signification of the words, which the paraphrase on the end of the verse expresses. That so wise and ancient a republic as that of Marseilles, originally a Greek colony, should have retained this savage usage, is astonishing; yet Servius expressly asserts it. Serv. in Æneid Lib. III. Lin. 75.

the off-scouring of all things unto this day.

the infernal deities among the Gentiles, and loaded with curses, affronts and injuries, in the way to the altars, at which they are to bleed: [*or like*] *the refuse of all things to this day*, the very sweepings of the streets and stalls, a nuisance to all around us, and fit for nothing but to be trampled upon by the meanest and vilest of mankind.

SECT. VIII.

1 Cor. IV. 13.

14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn *you*.

14 *I do not write these things to shame you*, or in any degree to stain your credit with other churches, by such a representation, as if you were unmindful of my sufferings for the gospel; *but* considering the relation in which we stand to each other, and looking upon you *as my beloved sons, I warn* [*you*] of those dangers to which I fear you may be exposed, and of the regard which it is your duty and interest to pay to those who voluntarily subject themselves to so many evils on your account, that you ought surely to be the last to increase their burdens.

15 For though you ahve ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

15 And I may particularly urge this with respect to myself; *for if you have ten thousand instructors in Christ*, be they ever so many, or ever so valuable, *yet* [*you have*] *not many* spiritual *fathers, for in Christ Jesus I* Paul *have begotten you by the gospel:* I preached it first among you, and was the happy means of your spiritual birth, and all the privileges of God's children which you receive by it.

16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

16 *I beseech you therefore*, [*that*] with filial piety and duty *ye be* all *imitators of me*, keeping strictly to the faith which I taught you, and carefully copying my meekness and humility.

17 For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

17 *For this reason*, that you may be the better able to trace my steps, and may be animated to do it with the greater care, *I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved son*, or dear convert, (Acts xix. 22,) *and* who, though yet but a young man, is remarkably *faithful in the Lord*, an excellent Christian, *who will* be able more perfectly to *bring to your remembrance my ways in Christ, as I am every where teaching in every church* where I come; by which you will perceive, that I do not act partially with respect to you, but proceed on general principles of integrity and prudence, from which I no where allow myself to vary.

SECT. VIII. 1 Cor. IV. 18. *Some,* I hear, *are puffed up* in vain and proud confidence, *as if,* after all I have said, *I would not come to you,* and did not dare to appear in a place where I have now so many opposers.

18 Now some are puffed up as though I would not come to you.

19 *But* they are extremely mistaken, for *I will* certainly *come to you,* and that *quickly* too, *if the Lord,* who holds the reins of universal government in his hands, *permit: and* I *will* then *know* and examine, *not the* confident *speech,* and florid talk *of those that are* thus *puffed up, but the power* they have to vindicate their pretensions, and what miraculous proof they can give of that authority in the church which they presume to oppose to mine.

19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.

20 *For the kingdom of God is not in speech,* in confident assertions, or in elegant forms of address, *but* is established *in* the exertions of a miraculous *power,* conferred on the true and genuine apostles of our Lord by the effusion of his Spirit upon them, by virtue of which, his faithful subjects may be fully satisfied, they act according to his will, in paying them the regard they require.

20 For the kingdom of God *is* not in word, but in power.

21 *What* therefore *do you* on the whole desire, and *choose? That I should come to you,* as it were, *with a rod*[f] of correction in my hand, using my apostolic power for your chastisement; *or,* which for your sakes I should much rather choose, *in love, and in the spirit of meekness* and gentleness, comforting and commending, instead of chastising? You will, I hope, think seriously upon the matter in time, before things are driven to such an extremity, as may not any longer leave it in my choice or yours.

21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?

[f] *With a rod* of correction.] That the apostles had often a miraculous power of inflicting death, and other temporal judgments, in case of aggravated offence, appears from other passages of scripture. Acts v. 5—10, chap. xiii. 10, 11; 1 Tim. i. 20; and is referred to more than once or twice, in these epistles to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 23, chap. x. 6, 8, chap. xiii. 2, 3, 10. And I cannot mention these passages, without leading my reader to reflect on the wisdom of Providence, in permitting such opposition to arise against St. Paul, particularly at Corinth. It gave him an opportunity of making the strongest appeals to what they are supposed to know of his miraculous power; and had these appeals not been indeed founded on the most certain and evident truth, they must, instead of restoring him to their regards, as we find in fact they did, have been sufficient of themselves utterly to have ruined all his reputation and interest among them, had it before been ever so great.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. VIII.

How adorable is the efficacy of Divine grace which bore those zealous and faithful servants of Christ through all their labours and fatigues, when they were made *a spectacle to the world, to angels and men!* How glorious a spectacle! worthy surely, as any thing, since that wonderful scene on Calvary, of the eye of God himself. Verse 9

How little are we to judge of the Divine favour by external circumstances, when those best of men were of all others the most miserable, farther, than as their heavenly hope supported and animated them? And when that is taken into the account, who would not emulate their lot, though *hungry and thirsty,* though *naked, and destitute, without habitation,* without protector, without friends? When we consider their share in the Divine friendship, when we consider the blessed effects of their labours, and the glorious crown which awaits them after all their sufferings; surely they must appear happy in proportion to the degree in which they seemed miserable, and glorious in proportion to the degree in which the world held them as infamous! 11, 13

That illustrious person, whose epistles are now before us, knew not the pleasures of domestic life, in many of its most endearing relations. But God made him a *spiritual Father* to multitudes; and no doubt, as he urges the consideration on his *children in Christ,* he felt the joy arising from it strong in his own soul, when he said, I *have begotten you in Christ Jesus by the gospel.* Surely it ought never to have been forgotten by them; and if through the artifices of ill-designing men, and the remaining infirmities of their own character, it was sometimes, and in some degree forgotten now, yet undoubtedly, it would be remembered by them in the heavenly world for ever; even by as many as *the Lord his God had graciously given him.* And if there be any remembrance there, that they once grieved him, it will be an engagement to all those offices of an eternal friendship, which the exaltation of the heavenly state shall allow. In the mean time, his paternal affection for them wrought, not in a foolish fondness of indulgence, which in the language of Divine wisdom, is *hating a son;* but in the character of a prudent and faithful parent, who, desirous that his children may be as wise and good as possible, will rather use the *rod* than suffer them to be undone. Yet when he speaks of using it, he speaks with regret, as one who would rather chuse to act in the *spirit of gentleness,* and without any mixture of severity, how necessary soever. The whole of his subsequent conduct to the Corinthians, as far as it may be learned from this, or the following epistle, bears a perfect consistency with these expressions, and illustrates their sincerity. 15 14 21

SECT. VIII.

May God give to his ministers more of this truly apostolical spirit, more of those overflowings of holy love, attempering and attempered by that ardent zeal against sin, and that firm resolution in the discharge of duty which shone so brightly in the apostle, and in which he so freely and justly recommends himself to the imitation of his children and his brethren.

SECT. IX.

The Apostle proceeds to mention the irregularities which prevailed in the Corinthian church; and here handleth the case of the incestuous person, whom he commands them to separate from their communion. 1 Cor. V. 1, *to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS V. 1.

SECT. IX. 1 Cor. V. 1.

I HAVE spoken of coming to you with a rod of correction; and it is too probable I may be laid under a necessity of using it, though it be an unwilling necessity. For *it is generally reported*,[a] [*that there is*] a kind of *lewdness among you, and that* too *such* scandalous and enormous *lewdness as is not heard of* even *among the heathen*, degenerate as they are, and abandoned as their practices are known to be, even *that a certain person should have* used criminal converse with *his father's wife*.[b] 2 One would have imagined that a scandal like this, should have thrown the whole society into distress and humiliation, like the public mourning of a Jewish synagogue on the apostacy or ejection of one of its members; *and* yet it is said, that *ye are puffed up* with this spirit of pride and carnality which I have been mentioning *and* reproving. *Should ye not rather have lamented* on this sad occasion? and pursued those strenuous measures for reformation which the genius of the gospel

1 COR. V. 1.

IT is reported commonly, *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication, as is not so much as named amongst the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that

[a] *Generally reported.*] Dr. Whitby thinks, that the scandalous stories that were generally told among the heathen, of the incestuous practices of primitive Christians, had their original from the misrepresentation of this fact. Many quotations, brought by this learned author, and others, on this text, shew that incest was held in high abomination among the heathen; and an enormity of this kind is, (as well known,) called by Cicero, *Scelus incredibile et inauditum, an incredible and unheard of wickedness.* See also Grot. de Jure Bel. & Pac. Lib. II. Cap. v. § 14, No. 2.

[b] Criminal converse.] Probably some father had parted with his wife, perhaps provoked by her indiscretion, and his son, to whom she was mother-in-law, had married her; for by 2 Cor. vii. 12, it seems probable, the person injured was yet alive.

he that hath done this deed, might be taken away from among you.

3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed;

4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

so evidently dictates, *that he who hath committed this fact should be taken away from you*, and be no longer allowed to continue in your communion? *But* however negligent you have been, and whatever consequence I draw upon myself, by interposing in this affair, I cannot, I will not be silent. *I am absent indeed in body*, and therefore cannot take those vigorous steps which my zeal for the honour of Christ, and my tender concern for your reputation and happiness dictate: *but* I am *present in spirit*[c]; *I have* a distinct view of all the circumstances of the case, and therefore in as determinate a manner, *as if I were* actually *present*, I have *judged* and passed sentence on *him who* I know, *has* indeed *committed this enormity*. And the sentence I have passed is 4 this: *That ye being* all solemnly *gathered together* in full assembly, *in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and my spirit* being present with you, *with the* efficacious *power of our Lord Jesus Christ*, acting according to my determination, though I be at such a distance, and being ready to add an awful efficacy and sanction to your censure, *Do*, by a public and express 5 act, *deliver such an one* by name *to Satan*,[d] to be by him, as the terrible executioner of the Divine justice and displeasure, chastised and tormented, *in order to the destruction of the flesh, that*, for this shameful indulgence of its lascivious appetites and desires, it may be emaciated and enfeebled, and the offender, alarmed by sufferings of so extraordinary and formidable a nature, if possible, may be brought to true repentance and humiliation, that so *the* immortal *spirit may be saved, in the day of the*

[c] *Present in spirit.*] Some think this refers to an extraordinary gift which St. Paul had of discerning clearly and circumstantially what was done at a distance. Compare Col. ii. 5; 2 Kings v. 26, chap. vi. 12, See Dr. Benson's Hist. Vol. II. p. 16.

[d] *To deliver such an one to Satan*, &c.] Some think that, as Satan is considered as the head of all who are not under Christ as their head, that is, in the church of Christ, every one, who was cut off from the church, must of course be delivered over to Satan; but it seems much more reasonable to believe, that this refers to the infliction of some bodily pains or diseases, in which Satan might act as the instrument of the divine justice. Compare 1 Tim. i. 20, and this was for the destruction of the flesh; not directly of the fleshly principle, for in that sense it could not be opposed to the *saving the spirit in the day of the Lord;* but probably, as the paraphrase intimates, for the emaciating and enfeebling the powers of animal nature.

SECT. IX

Lord Jesus, from those infinitely more insupportable and everlasting agonies to which it might otherwise be doomed.

1 Cor V. 6.

6 Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

And give me leave on this occasion farther to tell you, that *your boasting*, whether of such a person as your friend, if he be remarkable for any peculiar distinction in gifts, abilities and circumstances, or against him, as your enemy, if he be of an opposite faction, [*is*] *not* by any means *good*.[e] *Do you not know*, in a familiar instance, which it may be profitable for you to recollect, *that a little leaven* quickly diffuses itself by a secret fermentation, till it *leaveneth the whole mass*. Thus will evil examples tend to spread in the church; and if a brand of infamy be not quickly set upon the incorrigible offender, wickedness will grow familiar, and lose its horror; so that many other members of your society may be polluted, ensnared and dishonoured.

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

7 Set yourselves *therefore* with a resolution and diligence, like that which the Jews shew in all their dwellings, when the annual feast of the passover is approaching, to *purge out the old leaven*: search for it, as it were, with lighted candles, wherever you suspect any of it to lurk unobserved, *that ye may* indeed *be* entirely *a new mass*: *as ye are* by your Christian profession *unleavened*, let there be no mixture of any thing inconsistent with that simplicity and purity which the gospel teaches.

It is a diligence and resolution that becomes you; *for* we have not only the Divine command to enforce it, but this tender additional obligation, that *even Christ our passover was slain for us*.[f] He hath made his precious blood the price of our redemption, that he might make it the means of our sanctification, and that we, instead of being smitten by the sword of the

[e] *Your boasting is not good.*] L'Enfant would render it interrogatively, *Have you not a fine subject for boasting?* which is indeed more animated than our version; but I think, not in the taste and manner of St. Paul, nor does it seem exactly to suit the original.

[f] *Christ our passover was slain.*] It is well known, that Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, accuses the Jews with having taken out of the book of Esdras the following words, "*The passover is our Saviour, and our* "*refuge.*" L'Enfant thinks these words of St. Paul are an allusion to them.—It is a very inconclusive inference of some from this context, that this epistle was written about the time of the passover Compare chap. xvi. 8.

1 Cor. V. 8.

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness: but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

avenging angel, might sit down to a divine banquet in peace. *Let us then keep the* holy *feast* which he hath at such an expence provided for us, and in which he feedeth us even with his own flesh; and let us celebrate it in a manner which may do him the greatest honour, and be most pleasing to the adorable Author of our liberty and our happiness; that is, *not with the old* stale *leaven* of uncleanness, so common in your Gentile estate, *nor* with *the leaven of malignity and mischief*, which your Judaizing teachers would infuse, though it is as inconsistent with the benevolence, as the other with the purity of the gospel: *but* avoiding these with the strictest care, keep it *with the unleavened [bread] of sincerity and truth*; with the most simple and sincere desire of knowing and practising every branch of our duty; which if we really have, it will keep us from all these evils, and secure an uniformity of behaviour, honourable to our profession, and agreeable to the glorious scheme and design of its illustrious Author.

9 I wrote to you in an epistle, not to company with fornicators.

9 In this connection it occurs to me, and I conclude you remember, that *I wrote to you in an epistle* which I sent you before your messengers reached me, *that you should not converse with* fornicators and *lewd persons*[g], or others of ill fame and character. *But* I think you must apprehend,

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous or extortioner, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

10 that by what I then wrote, I intended *not entirely* to forbid all converse *with the lewd people of this world, or with covetous men or extortioners, or idolaters*, among your heathen neighbours; *for then*, as these characters so generally prevail among mankind in this degenerate state *you must indeed go out of the world*, and seek some solitary abode in the wilderness; which is what I never intended to require or encourage.

11 But now I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a

11 *But* the intent of what I then said, and of what *I have now written unto you*, is, *that if any who is named a* Christian *brother, be* evidently *a lewd person, or* remarkably *covetous, or* in acts of oc-

g *Lewd persons.*] I have rendered πορνοι, *lewd persons*, in these verses, as I think it very plain the apostle intended the word should be taken in that extent; his argument concluding yet more strongly against some other species of lewdness, than against what is called *simple fornication*, detestable as that is. See Vol. I. p. 222, note f, and Vol. II. p. 220, note f.

SECT. IX.

1 Cor. V. 11.

casional, though not stated and customary worship, *an idolater, or* even *a railer,* who labours to provoke others by foul language, and insulting behaviour, or injures any in their absence by slanderous reports, *or a drunkard,* and in any other respects, an abandoned sensualist, *or* rapacious *extortioner, you should not converse* familiarly, *or so much as eat with such an one,* in common life, and much less, in such religious solemnities as are peculiar to the church of Christ, which ought ever to be a pure and holy society.

fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat.

12 You must understand my caution with such a limitation as this: *for what have I to do,* as a Christian apostle, *to judge those that are without* the pale of the church? Of others indeed I may speak; for *do not* even *you,* in your more private capacity, *judge those that are within?* I have taught you that every private Christian should be concerned in his station to maintain the discipline of the church of Christ, and to bear his testimony against disorderly walkers, which may

12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within.

13 at present have a place in it, *But* let it be remembered, that *those who are without, God judgeth*[h]; and he will find a way, sooner or later, to testify his awful displeasure against them for crimes which they have committed against the law of nature, and that acquaintance with it which he knows they actually had, or might have attained. *Therefore* in consideration of this, both in one view, and the other, let it be your immediate care, as you regard the peace of the church, and the safety of your own souls, speedily, and with all due solemnity, to *take away from among yourselves the wicked person*[i] I have mentioned, and any others, whose characters may, like his, be scandalous and infectious.

13 But them that are without, God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

[h] *Those who are without, God judgeth.*] Dr. Whitby thinks this is an oblique reference to the mother-in-law of the incestuous person, who was a heathen; which, from the apostle's giving no directions concerning her, is not improbable. But I think, the views of St. Paul in this clause, were more extensive, and have paraphrased them accordingly.

[i] *Take away,* &c.] This seems plainly to imply, that the Corinthians had a power of *excommunication* in *themselves,* as has generally been pleaded by congregational writers from this text.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. IX.

HAPPY are those churches who have it in their power to exercise godly discipline, and to chase from their communion such members as are its reproach and scandal! Happy they, who having this power, have the courage and fidelity to use it, so as not to be shamed and condemned by it. Let us not be too much surprised, that offences come, and if there are, even in Christian societies, some enormities beyond what are commonly heard of among the Gentiles. It is no wonder, if such abandon themselves, yea, if they are in righteous judgment abandoned of God, to the uncontroulable rage of their own lusts and corruptions, and the great enemy of souls be suffered to carry them captive at his pleasure. Let it however be our concern, that when this is the case, *the wicked person be taken away*. And though the extraordinary power which the apostles had, be long ceased, and we cannot deliver over offenders for correction to Satan, as they did, let us take such methods as are still open, for *purging the old leaven* out of our churches; and O, that we may be enabled *to purge it out of* our hearts! remembering *Christ our passover, who was slain for us*, feeding daily upon him by faith, and keeping the sacred festival at once with joy and gladness, and with simplicity and sincerity of heart.

Verse 13, 1, 5, 7

Lamentable indeed is it that so many vices should prevail in human nature; that he, who would avoid all society with persons of a bad character, *must needs go out of the world*. But most lamentable of all, that any one who is *called a brother*, should be a *fornicator, or covetous, an idolater, or railer, a drunkard, or an extortioner*. May God preserve us from such detestable crimes, and may he purge out all such spots as these from our feasts of charity! and to that end may he quicken our zeal to bear a testimony against them, in every such method as suits our relation and circumstances of life! Above all, let not any ever imagine, that being joined in communion with a Christian church, can excuse the guilt of such immoral and scandalous practices, for which *the wrath of God comes even upon the children of disobedience* among the heathen. God will have his time *to judge them that are without*; and not only Christians at large, as some may fondly and perhaps profanely be ready to call themselves, but Mahometans and Pagans too, shall find articles like these, sitting upon their souls with a dreadful weight, and if sincere repentance do not make way for pardon, plunging them into the lowest abyss of misery, into a state of everlasting separation from the blessed God, and all his holy and acceptable servants.

10, 11, 13

SECT. X.

The Apostle reproves the Corinthians for prosecuting their brethren in heathen courts; and solemnly warns them of the sad consequences which would attend the indulgence of those criminal dispositions and practices in which Christianity found them, and from which it was intended to deliver them. 1 Cor. VI. 1—11.

1 CORINTHIANS VI. 1.

SECT. X.

1 Cor. VI. 1

I HAVE already mentioned one very great irregularity among you; and now I am under an unhappy necessity of animadverting upon another; which is, that you enter into suits of law with each other in heathen courts. And is this possible? *Dare any of you* indeed act so shameful a part? Can you really be so imprudent, *having any matter* [*of complaint*] *against another*, as to *refer it to the* decision of men, who lie under so many temptations to be *unjust, and not* of *the saints*[a], of your Christian brethren, from whose sanctity of character and profession you might reasonably expect the most equitable usage, and the utmost tenderness in accommodating differences, upon the easiest 2 terms that justice will allow. *Do you not* yet indeed *know*, have you never been told it by me, or by any other, *that the saints shall* in the great day *judge the world?* that they shall be assessors with Christ in that solemn judgment when he shall condemn all the ungodly? (Compare Mat. xix. 28.) *And if the world is* shortly *to be judged by you, are ye unworthy of determining the most inconsiderable matters* which daily occur in your secular affairs?

3 I repeat it again; and you will find it a striking argument, if you will allow yourselves to reflect upon it; *know you not, that we shall*

1 COR. VI. 1. DARE any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?

2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

3 Know ye not, that we shall judge

[a] *Unjust—saints.*] The heathen judges, as Paul seems here to insinuate, or rather in effect to declare, were *generally* unjust: Christians were *generally* good, righteous, and holy men. There might be exceptions on each side, but the apostle's argument turns on what might commonly be supposed. The saints, who are to judge angels, are not merely professing Christians.—To suppose that the case of the incestuous Corinthian had been carried before a heathen judge, as Mr. Locke supposes, seems entirely groundless. A thousand other disputes might have occasioned the remonstrance before us.

SECT. X.

angels? how much more things that pertain to this life.

judge even the fallen *angels*[b] themselves, who, notwithstanding all their malignity and pride, shall be brought to that tribunal at which you, having gloriously passed your own trial, shall be seated with Christ your victorious Lord, when by his righteous sentence he shall send these rebellious spirits to that flaming prison which Divine justice hath prepared for them. *And* [*are ye*] *not* then much more apparently [*worthy to judge*] *the* little trifling *affairs which relate to this* mortal *life?*

1 Cor. VI. 3.

4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.

4 *If therefore ye,* who have such great honours and dignities in view, *have,* in the mean time, any little *controversies* with each other, *relating to the affairs of this life, do ye set those to determine them, who are of no esteem at all in the church,*[c] but whom ye know to be idolaters, despisers of the gospel, and enemies to your great Master, and his cause, as your heathen neighbours undoubtedly are?

5 I speak to your shame. It is so, that there is not a wise

5 *I speak* [*this*] *to your shame;* and hope you blush while you read it. Are things indeed come to such a pass in your church, celebrated as it is, and boasting so much of its wisdom, that this should be necessary? *What, is there*

[b] *Shall judge angels.*] Had the apostle, as Dr. Whitby supposed, referred to the power which many Christians had of driving out demons from those who were possessed by them, he would not have spoke of this as a future thing, nor can we suppose it to have been common to all Christians, nor would it have afforded an argument equally forcible with that which the paraphrase suggests. Mr. Reynolds extends the interpretation yet farther, and seems to infer from it, that the holy angels are still in a state of probation, and shall be rewarded at the last day, according to the degree of their fidelity and activity in the services assigned to them by Christ, as the head of angels, who shall take his redeemed from among men, to be assessors with him in that final sentence. Reyn. of Ang. p. 183. But the angelic legions are represented in quite another view, namely, as ministering to Christ, adding pomp to his appearance, and executing his sentence, which, I think, sufficiently proves that this is an ungrounded interpretation, and that if any such judgment is to pass, with regard to them, it must be at some other time, and in some other place. But there seems a peculiar dignity and propriety, in this determination of the great God, that when the *devils,* who are expressly said *to be reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day,* shall be condemned, the *saints,* being raised to the seats of glory which these wicked spirits have forfeited and lost, should assist in that sentence which shall display the victory of Christ over them in these his servants, once their captives, and will no doubt, render the sentence itself yet more intolerable, to creatures of such malignity and pride.

[c] *Do ye set them,* &c.] Our translation renders it, *set them to judge, who are least esteemed in the church,* as if the apostle had said, "take the meanest Christian, "rather than any heathen." But I follow that preferred by Beza and Whitby. Limborch would understand κριτηρια, as equivalent to δικαςηρια, and render it as a piece of advice, "constitute to yourselves courts of judicature, relating to civil affairs."—Elsner shews, that καθιζειν, signifies *to place persons on judicial seats,* Observ. Vol. II. p. 93.

SECT. X.

1 Cor. VI. 6.

not one wise *intelligent person among you* all, *who may be able to determine the cause of a* Christian *brother? But* though the civil constitution allows you to decide these things among yourselves, *one brother hath a suit against another, and this before infidels*,[d] who cannot but be greatly scandalized at this, and take occasion from your mutual quarrels and accusations, to brand the whole body of you as injurious and avaricious; who while you pretend to be so far superior to secular views, are yet so strongly attached to them, that with all your professions of universal benevolence and brotherly love, you cannot forbear wronging one another?

7 *Therefore*, whoever may have the right on his side, on this or that particular question, *even this is altogether a fault among you*, that you bring it under the cognizance of heathens,[e] on whatever occasion it be, *that ye have* such lawsuits and *contests with each other*. *Why do ye not rather endure wrong* patiently, and sit down by the loss? *Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded*, than seek such a reme-

8 dy as this? *But* indeed, to speak plainly, *you do wrong, and you defraud even* [*your*] *brethren*. By such proceedings as these, you do much greater injury to the church of Christ, and the common cause of religion, than you can sustain from any particular brother against whom you advance a complaint. Nor is this the only thing wherein you are to blame, nor the only instance in which you injure each other.

9 And permit me to expostulate with you a little on this head. *What!* can you contentedly sacrifice this great and glorious hope which the gospel gives you? With all your boasted knowledge, *do ye not indeed know, that the unjust shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived*

man among you? no not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? 6 But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.

7 Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?

8 Nay, ye do wrong and defraud, and that *your* brethren.

9 Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither

[d] *One brother hath a suit against another, &c.*] Josephus observes, that the Romans, (who were now masters of Corinth,) permitted the Jews in foreign countries, to decide private affairs, where nothing capital was in question, among themselves; and from hence Dr. Lardner argues the justice of this rebuke of St. Paul, as there is no room to doubt but Christians might have had the same privilege, as they were looked upon as a Jewish sect. Credibility, Vol. I p. 165. But separate from that, they might certainly by mutual consent have chosen their brethren as referees.

[e] *Even this is altogether a fault among you.*] That ηδη, should be rendered *even*, Raphelius hath well observed, and proved. Annot. ex Herod. in loc.

SECT. X.

I. Cor. VI. 9.

fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

18 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

by a vain imagination, that the Christian name and privileges will secure you in the practice of your vices: for I now solemnly assure you, as I have often done, that *neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate persons,* who give themselves up to a soft indolent way of living, and can endure no hardships in the way of duty and honour; *nor Sodomites,* those infamous degraders of human nature. 10 *Nor thieves, nor* those who are insatiably *covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor rapacious persons,* who by extortion, or any other kind of violence, invade the property of their neighbours; *shall inherit* that pure and peaceful region, *the kingdom of God,* where holiness and love must for ever reign, under the auspicious government of his Son.

11 *And* while I write this, excuse me, that I think it my duty solemnly, though tenderly, to call you, my dear brethren, to recollect, that *such* detested creatures as these, *were some of you* in your unconverted state! as many of your neighbours know, and as you yourselves, with deep humility and agony of soul, confessed. *But ye are washed,* not merely by the baptism of water: *but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified;* Divine grace has made a happy change in your state and temper; and ye are purified and renewed, as well as discharged from the condemnation to which ye were justly obnoxious, *in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of* him whom we are now taught, through that common Saviour, to call with complacency *our God.* You ought therefore ever to maintain the most grateful sense of this important blessing, to stand at the remotest distance from sin, and to be tender of the peace and honour of a society which God hath founded by his extraordinary interposition, and into which he hath been pleased in so wonderful a manner to bring even you, who were once in the most infamous and deplorable state.

IMPROVEMENT.

ALAS! How great a reproach do we bring on our Christian profession, by so immoderate an attachment to our secular interests! How much does the family of our common Father suf-

SECT. X. Verse 6

fer, while *brother goes to law with brother!* What are these little interests of mortal life, that the heirs of salvation, *by whom angels are to be judged*, should wrangle about them, and for the sake of them do wrong, and that even to their brethren!

8 Men had need, where such a temper prevails, to examine 9 themselves, and take heed that they be not deceived; for though good men may fall into some degrees of this evil, through negligence or mistake, yet certainly it looks too much like the 9, 10 character of such of whom the apostle testifies, that *they shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Let us observe, that in this catalogue are contained, not only the most infamous and enormous offenders, but some, who perhaps may be tempted, because of their freedom from flagitious crimes, to think much better of themselves than they ought. We find here the effeminate, and covetous, and revilers, and extortioners, ranked with adulterers, and fornicators, with thieves and drunkards, with idolaters and Sodomites. We can never be secure from danger of falling into the greatest sins, till we learn to guard against the least; or rather till we think no evil small; viewing every sin in its contradiction to the nature of God, and in the sad aspect it bears with regard to an eternal state.

11 But how astonishing is it to reflect, that when the apostle is speaking of persons of such infamous characters, he should be able to add, in his address to his Christian brethren at Corinth, *And such were some of you!* Who must not adore the riches and sovereignty of Divine grace? were such as these the best of the heathen world? were such as these prepared by their distinguished virtues to receive farther assistance? let us rather pay our homage to that grace, which went, as it were into the suburbs of hell, to gather from thence citizens of heaven. And let the worst of men learn, not to despair of salvation, when made sincerely desirous of being *washed* and *sanctified*, as well as *justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* It is that name, it is that Spirit alone, which accomplishes works like these. And, blessed be God, all the wonders of this kind were not exhausted in those early ages, but some have been reserved for us, *on whom the end of the world is come:* the gospel hath exerted its triumphs in our own days, and they shall be renewed in those of our children. Only let none from hence presume to *turn the grace of God into wantonness;* lest instead of being among the few, who are made the trophies of the Divine mercy, they should perish with the multitude of the ungodly world, who die in their pollutions, and go down to final and irreversible condemnation.

SECT. XI.

Whereas some among the newly-converted Corinthians, might not be sufficiently sensible of the enormity of the sin of fornication, the Apostle, after some useful reflections on things really indifferent, expresses himself strongly on that head, and pleads those views peculiar to Christianity, which especially illustrate the heinousness of it. I Cor. VI. 12, *to the end.*

1 COR. VI. 12.

ALL things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

I CORINTHIANS VI. 12.

SECT. XI. 1 Cor. VI. 12

I KNOW, some of you at Corinth, allow yourselves to philosophize with great liberty, and find many excuses for doing things which others conscientiously scruple: but as matters at present stand, I think it necessary to give you some cautions upon this head. Suppose the things in question to be as indifferent in their own nature, as many of you would fain persuade yourselves and others, they are: I will, for argument sake, grant, that *all* these *things are lawful for me; but* at the same time you must acknowledge, if you reflect ever so little, that *all* such *things are not convenient:* circumstances may make it improper for me to do that which is not absolutely and universally criminal. And though it be allowed, that *all things* in question *are lawful for me, nevertheless, I will not be brought under the power of any* such *thing.* But am solicitous to maintain such a superiority to appetite and passion, as becomes a man and a Christian in these cases. This 13 maxim may be particularly applied to the supposed difference between one kind of food and another. All *meats*, capable of ministering to our nourishment, [*are*] indifferently made *for the* use of the *belly, and the belly* is made *for* receiving and digesting *meats.* It is true; *but* then it ought to be remembered, that the time will quickly come, when *God will destroy both it and them;* meats, and the organs by which they have been received, and this animal frame, which has been nourished by them, shall be mixed together in the grave, and moulder into dust. Since therefore they refer only to this mortal body, so soon to be reduced to its first mean

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SECT. XI.

1 Cor. VI. 13

principles, it is certainly beneath the dignity of the Christian character, to be a slave to this or that kind of meats; or in any instances to indulge this perishing flesh, so as to injure the souls of others, or hazard our own.

But if any man extend the maxim I have mentioned above, to patronize any kind of lewdness, it would be a groundless and most unjustifiable inference: for it is most certain, that *the body is not* made *for* so infamous a purpose as *fornication*, nor can the commission of it be ever necessary or expedient: *but* it was on the contrary, formed *for* the service of *the Lord*, that, while we continue in it, we might devote all our animal as well as rational powers, to our great Creator and Redeemer; *and the Lord* is in an important sense *for the body*, he is the great Saviour of the body, as well as of the soul, and will make it at last appear, that he hath not forgotten the meaner part of our nature, in the gracious scheme he hath formed for our felicity:

14 *And* this scheme shall surely be effectual; for *God* the Father *hath both raised up the Lord* Jesus Christ, from the dead to an immortal life, *and will also raise us up*, in like manner, *by his* Divine and almighty *power*, and transform these bodies of ours, into a resemblance of the glorified body of our Lord; which should certainly raise us above all impure affections and desires, and engage us to live in the body, in some conformity to so divine and glorious a hope.

14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.

15 Enter, I beseech you, into the thought; and let me expostulate freely with those who are ready to forget it. *Know ye not* indeed, *that*, as *your bodies* make an essential part of yourselves, they *are* to be considered as *members of Christ*, belonging, as it were, to his body, and in that view under his care, as to their final and everlasting happiness with him. *Shall I then take* these which I am taught to look upon as in an important sense *the members of Christ, and* prostitute them to so infamous a purpose, as to *make them the members of an harlot* by unlawful embraces? *God forbid!* It is a thing not to be thought of, without the utmost abhorrence and

15 Know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

16 indignation. *What, know ye not, that he who is* thus *joined to an harlot, is one body* with her?

16 What, know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for

SECT. XI.

1 Cor. VI. 16.

two (saith he,) shall be one flesh.

For say [*the Divine oracles*,] speaking of that conjunction which whoredom prostitutes to the dishonour of matrimony, so wisely and graciously ordained by God, (Gen. ii. 24,) *they two*, that is, the man and his wife, *shall be one flesh.*

17 But he that is joined unto the Lord, is one spirit.

17 *But* on the other hand, *he that is joined to the Lord* by a true faith, *is one spirit* with him. And as the head and members of the natural body are one, as they are acted upon by the same spirit, so the same Divine and holy Spirit, which lives in Christ as the Head, is communicated to us from him; just as the vital spirits are communicated from the head to the limbs. Now what thought can be more monstrous than that any one should think of being, at the same time, one spirit with the Lord, and one flesh with an harlot?

18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth, is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body.

18 Let this therefore be instead of ten thousand arguments to engage you to *flee whoredom:* concerning which, one may farther plead, that *every* [*other*] *sin, which a man practises, is without the body;* its effects fall not so directly upon the body, but often more immediately upon the mind[a]. *But he that committeth whoredom*, or any kind of lewdness, *sinneth* particularly *against his own body*[b], not only polluting and debasing it, by making it one with so infamous a creature, but perhaps infecting and enfeebling, wasting and consuming it, which these vices, when grown habitual and frequent, have an apparent tendency to effect. (Compare Prov. v. 11; Job xxxvi. 14.) There is also another view, in which the baseness of this crime must appear to you, Christians, in consequence of your relation to that blessed agent, the Spirit of God.

19 What, know

19 Have you not all been baptized in his name, and instructed in

[a] *Every* [*other*] *sin*, &c.] It would be unreasonable to insist on the most rigorous interpretation of these words; but the general sense is plain and true, and I suppose, that on the whole, there is no other sin by which the body receives equal detriment, considering not only its nature, but how much it has prevailed.

[b] *He that committeth whoredom, sinneth against his own body.*] This is well illustrated by a fine passage of Xenophon, produced by Raphelius here, in which Socrates is represented as saying, "that "intemperate men hurt themselves far "more than others; whereas other sinners secure some profit to themselves, "though they are injurious to others."— It is evident, that πορνεια, must here signify *any unlawful commerce between persons of different sexes*, since whoredom with married women is as directly contrary both to the honour and health of the body, as with single.

SECT. XI.

1 Cor. VI. 19.

your relation to him: *What, know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost* which *is in you*, dedicated to him, and inhabited by him; even that spirit *which you receive of God*, as his most valuable gift? *And*, on the whole, in whatever view you consider yourselves, it will appear, that *ye are not* by any means *your own* property, nor can be justly at your own disposal, to seek your present gratification without controul, or regard to the will of a superior.

ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own.

20 *For* the contrary is most apparent; *ye are bought with a price*, and that infinitely beyond what you can pretend to be worth. *Therefore*, far from doing any thing to bring a dishonour on religion, you ought in every action, word, and sentiment, to own yourselves his property, and exert yourselves to the utmost, in a course of vigorous and constant obedience, to *glorify God* both *with your body and with your spirit, which are*, by the justest title, *God's;* as he hath not only created, preserved, and maintained you, but by the invaluable blood of his Son purchased and redeemed you to himself, and by his holy Spirit taken possession of you, and marked you for his own.

20 For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

IMPROVEMENT.

How peculiar is the excellence of the Christian religion! With what incomparable advantages doth it enforce all the lessons of moral virtue, which it teaches! With what holy disdain should we look on the baits of sense, and the pollutions which are in the world through lust, if we seriously and often reflected on these two things—That *our bodies are the members of Christ, and that they are the temples of the Holy Ghost!* Let it be our care, that they may not only be nominally, but really so. That we may by a living faith be united to the Lord, so as to become one spirit with him, animated by that Spirit which resides in him and dwells in all who are truly his.

Verse 15, 19, 17

Let us, as often as we are tempted to alienate ourselves from the service of God, reflect upon *the price with which we are bought.* How great, how important a price, which we should never think of but with secret shame, as well as admiration and love! O Lord, hast thou paid such a ransom for me, and shall I act as if I thought even this not enough? as if thou hadst acquired only a partial and imperfect right to me, and I might divide myself between thee and strangers, between thee and thine ene-

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mies? O may we be entirely thine! and make it the business of the latest day and hour of our lives, *to glorify God with our bodies* and *with our spirits, which are his!*

SECT. XI.

Under the influence of this thought, may we effectually enter into the wise and pious suggestions of the apostle; and guard, not only against things absolutely and universally unlawful, but likewise against those, which, in present circumstances, may be inconvenient. May we be ever ready to exert a holy freedom of soul, and a superiority to whatever may ensnare and enslave us; which we shall more easily obtain, if we reflect on the transitory duration of the objects of appetite and sense: how soon the things we enjoy, and these bodies by which we enjoy them, shall be reduced to the dust, out of which they were taken. God destroys all that is present and visible, that we may look more intensely *for a kingdom that cannot be moved.* He reduces our bodies to putrefaction, that we may learn to cultivate with greater care the interest of a never-dying soul; which if we faithfully and diligently pursue, *God who hath raised up his Son* as our surety and Saviour, *will also raise* us up by his own power, to enjoyments sublime, incorruptible, and eternal. *O Lord! we would wait for thy salvation, and* in the meanwhile would *do thy commandments;* and animated by so exalted a hope, would *purify ourselves even as thou art pure.*

Verse 12, 13, 14

SECT. XII.

The Apostle proceeds to answer certain questions which the Corinthians had put to him; and first, what related to the marriage-state; and in these introductory verses, he determines that in some circumstances it should be entered into, and continued in, but in others, forborne; and forbids wives to depart from their husbands. 1 Cor. VII. 1—11.

1 COR. VII. 1.

NOW concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: *It is* good for a man not to touch a woman.

2 Nevertheless, *to*

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 1.

SECT. XII. 1 Cor. VII. 1

I *NOW* proceed to give you my opinion *concerning those things about which you wrote to me.* And I begin with that concerning the lawfulness or expedience of marriage. And here I must first observe, that as to its expedience, [*it is*] in present circumstances *good for a man,* where he is entirely master of himself, *to have nothing to do with a woman;* so many are the conveniencies which recommend a single life to those who are proof against some of its most obvious temptations. *Nevertheless,* as the God 2 of nature has for certain wise reasons implanted

SECT. XII.

1 Cor. VII 2.

in the sexes a mutual inclination to each other, *in order to prevent fornication*, and every other species of uncleanness, *let every man have* and retain *his own* proper *wife; and let every woman have* and retain *her own* proper *husband:* for neither divorce nor poligamy are by any means agreeable to the genius of the gospel.

avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

3 *Let the husband*, where this relation is commenced, *render* all *due benevolence to the wife, and in like manner also the wife to the husband:* let them on all occasions be ready mutually to oblige, and consult the happiness of each other's life. And let them not imagine that there is any perfection in living separate from each

3 Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.

4 other, as if they were in a state of celibacy. For *the wife hath not* in this respect *power over her own body, but* hath by the marriage-covenant transferred it to *the husband; and in like manner also, the husband hath not power over his own body, but* it is, as it were, the property of *the wife;* their engagements being mutual, so that on every occasion conscience obliges them to remain appropriate to each other, and consult their mutual good.

4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.

5 *Withdraw not* therefore *from* the company of *each other, unless [it be] by consent for a time; that ye may* be at leisure to *devote yourselves* more intensely *to fasting and prayer, and* that *ye may come together again* as usual, *lest Satan tempt you on account of your incontinence*, and take occasion from the irregular sallies of animal nature, to fill you with thoughts and passions, which marriage was in its original institution intended to remedy.

5 Defraud ye not one the other, except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.

6 *But* you will observe, that *I say this by permission* from Christ; but *not by any* express *command*,[a] which he gave in person in the days of his flesh, or gives by the inspiration and suggestion of his Spirit now: by which inspiration,

6 But I speak this by permission, *and* not of commandment.

[a] *By permission.*] I cannot, with Mr. Cradock, think, that the meaning of this clause, is, "I permit marriage, but do not enjoin it;" and have elsewhere observed, that this verse, and others in this context, nearly parallel to it, will be so far from affording, on any interpretation, an objection against the general inspiration of St. Paul's epistles, that they will rather strengthen the proof of it. See Essay on Inspiration in Vol. III.

you may conclude I am guided when I lay in no such precautions as these.

1 Cor. VII. 7.

7 For I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

But as *for* the main question we are now upon, *I could wish that all men were*, in this respect, *even as myself;* that all Christians could as easily bear the severities of a single life in present circumstances, and exercise as resolute a command over their natural desires.[b] *But every man has his proper gift of God, one in this kind*, or manner *and another in that.* So that though I give the best advice and example I can, I would not exalt myself on account of this attainment, nor despise those that have it not.

8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.

9 But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.

8 *But* as *to unmarried* men, who, like me, have buried their wives, *and* to the *widows, I say, it is good for them, (if they* conveniently can,) to *continue, as I do*, in the widowed state. 9 *But if they have not* attained to *such* a degree of *temperance*, as to be easy in it, *let them* by all means *marry. For* though it be better to live calmly and soberly in a state of widowhood, than to marry, *it is undoubtedly* much *better to marry* a second, or a third time, *than to burn*, and to be tormented with those restless passions which some in such circumstances feel.

10 And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

11 But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to *her* husband: and let not the husband put away *his* wife.

10 *But as to those that are married*,[c] [*it is*] *not I* [*who*] *command, but the Lord* Jesus Christ himself, who enjoins, *that the wife should not withdraw herself from* [*her*] *husband;* 11 *But if she be withdrawn* by her own rash and foolish act, *let her* not by any means contract another marriage; but *remain unmarried, or* rather if it may be accomplished by any submission on her side, *let her be reconciled to* [*her*] *husband*, that they may, if possible, live in such an union and harmony as the relation requires. *And let not the husband dismiss* [*his*] *wife* on any light account, or indeed, for any thing short of adul-

[b] *That all men were even as myself.*] Common sense requires us to limit this expression as in the paraphrase; for it would be a most flagrant absurdity to suppose, that St. Paul wished marriage might entirely cease. It shews therefore how unfair and improper it is, in various cases, to strain the apostle's words to the utmost rigour, as if he perpetually used the most critical exactness; but indeed, chap. ix. 22, is so full an instance to the contrary, that it is not necessary to multiply remarks of this kind.

[c] *To those that are married.*] The translation, published by the English Jesuits at Bourdeaux, renders it, *to those who are united in the sacrament of marriage;* which I mention as one instance, selected from a vast number, of the great dishonesty of that translation.

SECT. XII. 1 Cor. VII. 11.

tery. For whatever particular reasons Moses might have for permitting divorces on some slighter occasions, Christ our great Legislator, who may reasonably expect higher degrees of purity and virtue in his followers, as their assistances are so much greater, hath seen fit expressly to prohibit such separation, and we, his apostles, in our decisions upon this matter, must guide ourselves by the authority of his determination.

IMPROVEMENT.

The decisions of the holy apostle are here given with such gravity, seriousness, and purity, that one would hope, delicate as the subject of them is, they will be received without any of that unbecoming levity which the wantonness of some minds may be ready to excite on such an occasion.

It becomes us humbly to adore the Divine wisdom and goodness manifested in the formation of the first human pair, and in keeping up the different sexes through all succeeding ages, in so just a proportion, that *every man might have his own wife, and every woman her own husband;* that the instinct of nature might, so far as it is necessary be gratified without guilt, *and an holy seed be sought,* which being trained up under proper discipline, and instruction, might supply the wastes that death is continually making, and *be accounted to the Lord for a generation*: that so virtue and religion, for the sake of which alone it is desirable that human creatures should subsist, may be transmitted through every age, and earth become a nursery for heaven. (Verse 2, 4)

With these views, let marriages be contracted, when it is proper they should be contracted at all. Let none imagine the state itself to be impure; and let it always be preserved undefiled. Let all occasion of irregular desire be prudently guarded against by those who have entered into it. And let all Christians, in every relation, remember that the obligations of devotion are common to all; and that Christ and his apostles seem to take it for granted, that we shall be careful to secure proper seasons for fasting, as well as for prayer, so far as may be needful, in order that the superior authority of the mind over the body may be exercised, and maintained, and that our petitions to the throne of grace may be offered with greater intenseness, copiousness and ardour. (5)

SECT. XIII.

The Apostle exhorts Christians not to break marriage on account of difference in religion; and urges in the general, contentment

with the stations in which they were called, and a concern to serve God in their proper condition, whether married or single, bound or free. 1 Cor. VII. 12—24.

1 COR. VII. 12. BUT to the rest speak I, not the Lord, if any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 12.

SECT. XIII. 1 Cor. VII. 12.

I HAVE reminded you of the decision of Christ with respect to the affair of divorce: *now as to the rest* of the persons and cases to which I shall address myself, it is to be observed, that *I speak* according to what duty or prudence seems on the whole to require; and it is *not* to be considered as if it were immediately spoken by *the Lord*. *If any* Christian-*brother hath an unbelieving wife, and she consent to dwell with him*, notwithstanding the diversity of their religious persuasions, *let him not dismiss her*. 13 *And* on the other hand, *if any* Christian *wife have an unbelieving husband, and he consent to dwell with her, let her not dismiss him*,[a] nor separate herself from him, though the legal constitution of the country in which she lives may allow her to do it. 14 *For* in such a case as this, *the unbelieving husband is* so *sanctified to the wife, and the unbelieving wife is* so *sanctified to the husband*,[b] that their matrimonial converse is as lawful as if they were both of the same faith: *otherwise your children*, in these mixed cases, *were unclean*, and must be looked upon as unfit to be admitted to those peculiar ordinances by which the seed of God's people are distinguished; *but now they are* confessedly *holy*,[c]

[a] *Let her not dismiss him.*] I have elsewhere observed that in these countries, in the apostle's days, the wives had a power of divorce as well as the husband. See Vol. II. p. 226. note g.

[b] *Is sanctified*, &c.] Some think the meaning is, "the Christian may convert the infidel;" as appears, in that the children, of such marriages are brought up Christians. But this cannot possibly be the sense; for that they were brought up so, was not to be sure always fact, and where it was, there was no need of proving from thence the conversion of the parent, which would in itself be much more apparent than the education of the child.

[c] *Now are they holy.*] On the maturest and most impartial consideration of this text, I must judge it to refer to *infant-baptism*. Nothing can be more apparent than that the word *holy* signifies persons, who might be admitted to partake of the distinguishing rites of God's people. Compare Exod. xix. 6; Deut. vii. 6; chap. xiv. 2; chap. xxvi. 19; chap. xxxiii. 3; Ezra ix. 2; with Isa. xxxv. 8; chap. lii. 1; Acts x. 28, &c. And as for the interpretation, which so many of our brethren, the Baptists, have contended for, that *holy* signifies *legitimate*, and *unclean*, *illegitimate*; (not to urge that this seems an unscriptural sense of the word,) nothing can be more evident, than that the argument will by no means bear it; for it would be proving a thing by itself, *idem per idem*, to argue that the converse of the parents was lawful, because the children were not bastards; whereas all who thought the converse of the parents

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and are as readily admitted to baptism in all our churches, as if both the parents were Christians; so that the case you see, is in effect decided by this prevailing practice. *However if the unbelieving party*, in such circumstances as these, be absolutely determined, and *will depart, let him*, or her *depart*, and take the course they think best; and the consequence is, that *a brother* [or] *a sister*, who hath been united to such a wife or husband, in matrimonial bonds, is by such a conduct of a former partner, discharged from future obligation, and *is not in bondage in such* [*cases.*] *But* let it be always remembered, that *God hath* by his gospel *called us to peace;* and therefore it ought to be our care, to behave in as inoffensive a manner as possible, in all the relations of life; that so, if there must be a breach, the blame may not be chargeable upon the Christian.

1 Cor. VII. 15.

15 But if the unbelieving depart let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases:* but God hath called us to peace.

16 And it is worth your while to be very careful in your behaviour to those who thus make, as it were, a part of yourselves, that you may adorn the gospel you profess, by the most amiable and engaging conduct; *for* it is possible, the unbeliever may be thereby gained to Christianity. Let each therefore reflect on his own concern in this observation. For *how knowest thou, O wife, but thou mayest save* [*thine*] *husband? Or how knowest thou, O husband, but thou mayest save* [*thy*] *wife?* And surely the everlasting happiness of the person, now the companion of your life, will be more than an equivalent for all the self-denial to which you may

16 For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save *thy* husband? Or how knowest thou, O man whether thou shalt save *thy* wife?

17 be required at present to submit. *But* if this should not be the effect, it still becomes you to do your duty; and therefore since the providence of God is concerned in all these relations, and in the steps by which they were contracted, *as God hath distributed to every one*, and as it were, cast the parts of life, *let every one so walk, even as the Lord hath called him.*[d] This is the

17 But as God hath distributed to every man, the Lord hath led every one, so let him walk: and so ordain I [in] all churches.

unlawful, must of course think that the children were illegitimate.

[d] *As the Lord hath called him.*] This is a very pertinent digression, as it so directly contradicts the notion which prevailed among the Jews, that embracing the true religion dissolved all the relations which had before been contracted. Whereas the apostle here declares, that the gospel left them in this respect, just

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1 Cor. VII. 17

lesson I would inculcate on you Corinthians, *and thus I command in all the churches*, and charge it upon the consciences of men, as a lesson of the highest importance.

18 Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised? is any called in uncircumcision? Let him not become circumcised.

18 *Is any one*, for instance, *called*, *being circumcised, let him not become*, so far as in him lies, *uncircumcised* [e]; nor act, as if he were desirous, as far as possible, to undo what was done by his Jewish parents, or masters, in his infancy. *Is any one called* to the fellowship of gospel-blessings *in uncircumcision, let him not be* solicitous to be *circumcised*, as if that rite were necessary to his salvation, as the Jews, and some zealots amongst ourselves, have taught.

19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

19 For to speak the important truth in a few plain words, *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing;* the observation, or non-observation, of the Mosaic law, will neither secure nor obstruct our salvation; *but* all depends upon *keeping the commandments of God*. An obediential faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, produced by the sanctifying influences of his Spirit on the heart, and bringing forth the genuine fruits of holiness in our temper and life, is the great concern: and whether we be Jews, or Gentiles, circumcised, or uncircumcised, we shall be happy, or miserable for ever, as we are careful or negligent with regard to this.

20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.

20 As for other matters, be not excessively concerned about them; but *in whatever calling*, that is, profession and circumstance, *any one* of you *was called, in that let him continue;* affect not to change without the clear and evident leadings of Providence, as there is generally greater reason to expect comfort and usefulness in such a calling than another.

21 Art thou called *being* a servant? care not for it; but if

21 And I may apply this, not only to the different employments, but relations in life, as well as diversity in religious professions. *Art thou*, for instance *called* into the church of Christ, [*being*] in the low rank, not only of an hired servant, but *a slave? Do not* so much *regard it*, as upon that account, to make thy life uneasy:

as it found them; increasing instead of lessening, the obligations they were under to a faithful and affectionate discharge of their correspondent duties.

[e] *Become uncircumcised,*] The word ἐπισπάσθω, has an evident relation to *attempts*, like those referred to, 1 Mac. i. 15, which it is not necessary more particularly to illustrate.

SECT. XIII. 1 Cor. VII. 21.

but if thou canst, without any sinful method of obtaining it, *be made free*, *choose it rather*; as what is no doubt in itself eligible, yet not absolutely necessary to the happiness of a good man.

thou mayest be made free, use *it* rather.

22 *For he that is called by the Lord* to the Christian faith, [*being*] *a servant*, or slave, *is the Lord's freeman*. Christ has made him free indeed, in making him partaker of the glorious liberties of the children of God; (John viii. 36;) *and* on the other hand, *he also that is called* [*being*] *free* from the authority of any human master, *is* still *the servant*, the property *of Christ*, and owes him a most implicit and universal obedience.

22 For he that is called in the Lord, *being* a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, *being* free, is Christ's servant.

23 But upon this head, remember, that as Christians, *you were* all *bought with* a most invaluable *price*[f]: Christ hath redeemed you at the expence of his own blood; and therefore, let me caution you out of regard to him, and from a desire to be capable of serving him, as much as possible, that ye *do not*, where it may by any lawful means be avoided, *become the slaves of men*; since so many evils, and dangers, and snares, are inseparable from such a situation.

23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

24 This, *brethren*, is the particular advice which I thought proper to give upon this head; and the general rule I laid down above, is of such great importance, that I must repeat it; *in whatever* [*condition*] *a man was called* at first, by the gospel and grace of Christ, *in that let him abide with God*[g], taking care to behave in a prudent and religious manner, as under the

24 Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with God.

[f] *You were bought with a price*, &c,] Dr. Whitby would render it, "*Are ye bought* "*with a price*, that is, redeemed from "servitude? *Become not servants of men;* "do not sell yourselves for slaves again." It is indeed probable, that the apostle does counsel Christians against becoming slaves, if it could be prevented; and with great reason, as it was a circumstance which seemed less suitable to the dignity of the Christian profession, and must expose them to many incumbrances and interruptions in duty, especially on the Lord's day, and other seasons of religious assemblies; besides the danger of being present at domestic idolatrous sacrifices, or being ill-used, if they refused their compliance. But I cannot thoroughly approve of the Doctor's version because the advice is unnecessarily restrained thereby, to those slaves who had been redeemed; which plainly, as well suited those who had their freedom given them, and indeed suited all Christians who never had been at all slaves, and who might more easily have been prevailed upon, by their poverty, to bring themselves into a condition, the evils and inconveniencies of which they did not thoroughly know.

[g] *Abide with God.*] L'Enfant explains παρα τῳ Θεῳ *in the sight of God*, (Compare 2 Cor. xi. 11; Eph. v. 21,) and thinks there had been some disorders at Corinth, proceeding from some irregular claim which Christian slaves made to liberty, under pretence, that, as Christian brethren, they were equal with their masters.

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1 Cor. VII. 24.

Divine inspection; and not changing his business in life, if it be in general lawful, because he is a Christian; but endeavouring to pursue it with such integrity, diligence and prudence, as that his great Master and Saviour may be most effectually glorified.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 14

LET us learn, from the exhortations and reasonings of the apostle, a becoming solicitude, to contribute as much as we possibly can, to the Christian edification of each other; and especially let this be the care of the nearest relatives in life. What can be more desirable, than that the *husband may be sanctified by the wife, and the wife by the husband!* May all prudent care be taken, in contracting marriages, as to the religious character of the intended partner of life; and in those already contracted, where this precaution has been neglected, or where the judgment formed seems to have been mistaken, let all considerations of prudence, of religion, of affection, concur to animate to a mutual care of each other's soul, that most important effort of love, that most solid expression and demonstration of friendship. Nor let the improbability of success be pleaded in excuse for neglect, even where the attempt must be made by the subordinate sex. A possibility should be sufficient encouragement; and surely there is room to say, *How knowest thou, O wife, but thou mayest* (16) *save him*, whose salvation, next to thine own, must be most desirable to thee?

Let us all study the duties of the relations in which God hath fixed us; and *walk with him in our proper callings*, not desiring so much to exchange, as to improve them. His wise providence (24) hath distributed the part; it is our wisdom, and will be our happiness, to act in humble congruity to that distribution. Surely the apostle could not have expressed in stronger terms, his deep conviction of the small importance of human distinctions, than he here does; when speaking of what seems to great and generous minds, the most miserable lot, even that of a slave, he says, *Care not for it*[h]. If liberty itself, the first of all temporal bles- (21) sings, be not of so great importance, as that a man, blessed with the high hopes and glorious consolations of Christianity, should make himself very solicitous about it, how much less is there in those comparatively trifling distinctions on which many lay so disproportionate, so extravagant a stress!

Let Christian servants, (for blessed be God, amongst us we

[h] *Care not for it.*] This fine remark, (for such indeed it is,) occurs in Dr. Goodwin's Works, Vol. I. p. 50.

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have no slaves,) remember their high privileges, *as the Lord's freemen*. Let Christian Masters remember the restraint, *as the Lord's servants*. And let the benefits of liberty, especially, when considered in its aspect upon religion, be so far valued, as not to be bartered away for any price which the enemies of mankind may offer in exchange.

Verse 22

But above all, let us remember the infinite importance of maintaining the freedom of the mind from the bondage of corruption; and of keeping, with all humble and cheerful observance, the commandments of God. While many express the warmest zeal for circumcision, or uncircumcision, in defence of, or in opposition to, this, or that mode or form of external worship, let our hearts be set on what is most vital and essential in religion; and we shall find the happiest equivalent, in the composure and satisfaction of our own spirit now, as well as in those abundant rewards which the Lord hath laid up for them who fear him.

19

SECT. XIV.

The Apostle treats on the inexpediency of marriage, in the circumstances of the church at that juncture; and inculcates a serious sense of the shortness of time, as the best remedy against immoderate attachment to any secular interest. 1 Cor. VII. 25, *to the end*.

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 25.

SECT. XIV.

1 Cor. VII. 25.

BUT I have been insensibly led by these general views of our obligations and hopes, as Christians, to digress from the subject of marriage, which I had first in view, and to which it is time I should return. And here, *concerning* the case of *virgins* of either sex, *I have* received *no* express *commandment from the Lord*, as I had in the case handled above; whether by what is transmitted to us in Christ's discourses, or by any immediate and personal revelation[a]; *nevertheless, I give my opinion as one who hath received* grace and *mercy of the Lord, to be faithful* in the great charge he hath committed to me; and therefore, considering the many instances, in which I have been enabled to approve my fidelity to Christ and his church, may

1 COR VII. 25.

NOW concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

[a] Or by immediate and personal revelation.] To this, I think he refers, rather than the former, as he speaks in the singular number; whereas, else he might more properly have said, we have received none.

SECT. XIV.

1 Cor. VII. 26.

26 I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, I *say* that *it is* good for a man so to be.

27 Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.

28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.

29 But this I say, brethren, the time is short. It remaineth,

expect to be heard with some peculiar regard. *I apprehend this therefore to be* right and *good in the present exigency*[b] and extremity of affairs, while the church is in such a state of persecution, *that* [*it is*] *best for a* single *man to continue as he is.* (27) *Art thou* indeed *bound to a wife* already? my advice affects not thee; in that case bear patiently whatever burdens may occur, and *seek not to be loosed* from her by an irregular and scandalous divorce or separation. But on the other hand, *art thou loosed from a wife?* Hath Providence never led thee into those engagements, or has it broken the bond by the death of thy former companion? If thou canst conveniently and virtuously continue as thou art, *seek not a wife* at present, till the storm which now hovers over the church be a little blown over, and more peaceful times return. (28) *Yet if thou dost marry, thou hast not* thereby *sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned*: the marriage-state is no doubt both lawful and honourable; *yet such will have* probably some additional *affliction in the flesh*; they will be encumbered with the burden of many temporal affairs: and the representation which I make to you of these things, is not out of severity, *but* tenderness; as *I* would fain *spare you,* and speak on the whole, in this gentle and cautious manner on the subject, to avoid extremes either the one way, or the other.

(29) *But this I say, brethren,* with great confidence; and desire you would hear it with due attention; that *the* whole *time* of our abode in this world *is contracted*[c] within very narrow limits; *it remains therefore,* that we guard against too fond an attachment to any relation or pos-

[b] *Present exigency.*] This must certainly refer to the prevalence of persecution at that time; for nothing can be more absurd, than to imagine, that an inspired apostle would, in the general, discountenance marriage; considering that it was expressly agreeable to a divine institution, and of great importance to the existence and happiness of all future generations.

[c] *Contracted.*] The word συνεςαλμενος, properly imports this, being, (as many have observed,) a metaphor, taken from *furling* or gathering up *a sail.* Dr. Hammond, and some others, would render this, *it is but a little while, and they that have wives, shall be as though they had none.* That is, "I see these times of persecution rising, which will put men out of "a capacity of enjoying those temporal "delights which they may now be fond-"est of." But this does not seem an exact translation, though L'Enfant mentions it with considerable regard.

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session in life: so *that they who have wives, be in a manner, as if they had none; And they that weep, as not weeping* in streams of incon-
30 solable sorrow, though nature may be allowed to drop its moderate tear; *and they that rejoice, as not rejoicing* in dissolute and confident sallies of mirth, as if secure from any distressful revolution; *and they that purchase as not possessing* by a certain tenure what they must shortly re-
31 sign; *And they who use this world, as not carrying* the enjoyments of *it to an* unbridled *excess; for the* whole scheme and *fashion of this world passes off,*[d] and is gone like a scene in a theatre that presently shifts; or a pageant in some public procession, which how gaudily soever it may be adorned to strike the eyes of spectators, is still in motion, and presently disappears, to shew itself for a few moments to others. So transitory are all our enjoyments, and afflictions too, and worthy of little regard, when compared with the solid realities which are soon to open upon us, and never to pass away.

32 *But I would have you without anxiety,* while you continue here amidst all these uncertainties; and therefore it is, I advise you in present circumstances to decline marriage, if you conveniently can. For *an unmarried man careth for the things of the Lord* Jesus Christ, *how he may please the Lord,* and is in a great degree at leisure to employ his thoughts, and schemes, and labours, for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom among men; and sure there is no other employment so honourable, so delightful, and when remote consequences are taken into the
33 account, so profitable: *Whereas he who is married, careth for the things of the world,* how he may maintain his family, and *how he may please* [*his*] *wife,* and so accommodate himself to her
34 temper, as to make her easy and happy. On the other hand, *there is* just such a *difference between* the condition of *a wife and a virgin.*[e]

that both they that have wives, be as though they had none.
30 And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;
31 And they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away.

32 But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:

33 But he that is married, careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife.
34 There is difference also between a wife and a virgin:

[d] *Fashion of this world passes off.*] Σχημα παραγει. Compare 1 John ii. 17.

[e] *There is* just such *a difference,* &c.] Some would connect the word μεμερισται, with the close of the preceding verse, and render it, "*He that is married, cares,* &c. "*how he may please his wife, and is divided in his thoughts,*" or distracted with a "variety of anxieties." But this would occasion an unnecessary ellipsis in the beginning of this verse, and destroy the resemblance between the conclusion of the

SECT. XIV

1 Cor. VII. 34

the unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy, both in body and in spirit: but she that is married, careth for the things of the world, how she may please *her* husband.

She who is unmarried, is careful about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. She has leisure to attend to the higher improvement of religion in her soul, by the more abundant exercises of devotion, as well as to do something more for the advancement of religion among others; *whereas she that is married, careth for the things of the world, how she may please* [her] *husband*, [f] and the diversity of humours both in men and women, and the imperfection of even the best tempers, make this sometimes on both sides a difficult task, on which account single persons have always some considerable advantages, which are especially apparent in these times of public danger.

35 And this I speak for your own profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction.

35 *But all this I say for your own benefit*, with a sincere desire to promote your happiness, and *not that I may throw a snare upon you*,[g] and bind you from that which God for wise reasons instituted, and allows, and which the state of human nature generally requires; *but out of regard to what is* to be sure very *comely*[h] *and decent in the Lord, without* any *violent constraint*,[i] by which I might seem to drag you into a state of life, which should make you continually uneasy: for that would quite spoil its gracefulness as well as acceptance, and might plunge you into much greater inconveniencies another way.

36 But if any man

36 *But*, on the other band, *if any* on mature de-

two verses, when it is evident the apostle meant it to say the same of both the husband and wife.

[f] *How she may please her husband.*] The apostle in this text, and the counterpart to it, seems to declare, that single persons of either sex, have generally opportunities for devotion beyond those that are married, even in the most peaceful times of the church, and that a diversity of humours both in men and women makes it difficult for them to please each other so thoroughly as is necessary in order to make a married life delightful. So that it intimates, a caution to single people, to value and improve their advantages, and to married people, to watch against those things that would disturb them, and injure their mutual peace and comfort.

[g] *Not that I may throw a snare upon you.*] This is the most literal version I could give of βροχον ὑμιν επιβαλω. Mr Locke thinks the word βροχον, which signifies a cord, alludes to the Jewish phrase of *binding* what was declared unlawful.

[h] *Comely,* ευσχημον.] This seems to intimate, that they were now in a circumstance in which God did, as it were, exact a peculiar severity from all their thoughts, and that it was a time to think of the trials of martyrdom, rather than the endearment of human passions.

[i] *Without any violent constraint.*] Απερισπαστως, is rendered in our translation by the addition of several words, *that ye may attend on the Lord without distraction*. But Sir Norton Knatchbull has convinced me, that the version here given is much preferable to ours.

SECT. XV

1 Cor. VII. 36

liberation *apprehend that he acts an unbecoming part towards his virgin*-daughter, or any other maiden, that may fall under his guardianship and care, *if she pass the flower of* [*her*] *age*[k] in a single state; which, I know, is an opinion very prevalent among the Jews; *and* if he think *that it ought to be so, let him do what he will* in this respect: *he sinneth not* in his intent of letting her change her present condition; and therefore let him seek out a proper partner in life for

37 her, and *let them marry*. *But he that hath* hitherto *stood stedfast in his heart, having* also on her side *no* apprehension of any *necessity*, in consequence of what he discerns of her dispositions, and no engagement subsisting which might give another a just claim to her, *but hath power over his own will*, being at liberty to act as he pleases; *and hath* in such circumstances *determined in his* own *heart that he will keep his maiden* still single, *he does well*, and the part he acts is so far from being blameable, that in present circumstances it is much to be com-

38 mended. *So that* on the whole, the conclusion of the matter is this; *he, that* in such troublous

think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

37 Nevertheless, he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart, that he will keep his virgin, doeth well.

38 So then, he

[k] *Past the flower of her age, &c.*] There is hardly any passage in the epistle, about the sense of which I have been more perplexed than about this; and I am still far from being satisfied concerning it. I had once translated it, "*If any one thinks that "he acts an unbecoming part, by continuing "in his single state, till he be past the flower "of his age,—let them marry,—he that mar-"ries does well,*" &c. and had paraphrased the words accordingly. And what induced me to this, was, that verse 37, the apostle puts the issue of the matter on the stedfastness of his own mind, the power he had over his own will, and his having no necessity; whereas if a daughter, or a ward, were in question, her inclinations, temper and conveniency were certainly to be consulted; and it would be the same, if the virgin spoken of, was one to whom the man was himself engaged. But it is really doing such violence to the original, to render τηρειν την ἑαυτȣ παρθενον, *keep himself single*, or keep his own virginity; and to render εκγαμιζων, *he that marries*, that after long deliberation I chose to abide by our own version; especially since it agrees with most of those I have had an opportunity of consulting. And if this be admitted, I think it must be taken for granted, that when the apostle speaks of this man's having no necessity, he means to take in whatever might urge him to dispose of her in marriage, whether in her temper and inclinations, or in their domestic circumstances.—As for Heinsius's opinion, that ασχημονειν επι την παρθενον, signifies, *to incur shame by reason of his virgin*;" meaning if a man apprehend that his daughter will dishonour his family by fornication, he will do prudently to marry her: I think the above objection lies equally against the interpretation. But if the Alexandrine reading of γαμιζων, instead of εκγαμιζων, be admitted, it may deserve consideration, whether the whole passage may not refer to the case of a contract between a man and a young maiden, the accomplishment, or dissolution of which, might, in some imaginable circumstances, depend very much on the conduct of the man, as he seemed to urge, or decline, the bringing it into effect.

1 Cor. VII. 38.

that giveth *her* in marriage, doeth well: but he that giveth *her* not in marriage, doeth better.

times as these *gives* [*her*] *in marriage doeth well;* she may find opportunities in that relation both to adorn and to serve Christianity; *but* as things are circumstanced, I must needs declare, that where a man is under no necessity of doing it, *he that gives* [*her*] *not in marriage, doeth better;* and more effectually consults both his comfort and safety.

39 The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth: but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.

39 This however is beyond controversy certain, that *the wife is bound by the law* to continue with her husband, and submit herself to him, *as long as her husband liveth*: *but if her husband be dead, she is* in that case *free, and may marry to whom she will; only*, let her take care that she marry *in the Lord*, and that retaining a sense of the importance of her Christian obligations, she does not choose a partner for life of a different religion from herself. She may, I say, lawfully act thus; *but* I would not be understood to advise it; for *she is happier, according to my sentiment, if she continue as she is:* *and* I may modestly say, that *I appear to have the Spirit of God*[1] to guide me; and not merely some degree of experience, arising from the many observations which for a course of years I have made on human affairs. I may therefore reasonably suppose my judgment will have its peculiar weight, even where I do not pretend to decide with such an authority as should bind the conscience as by an apostolical dictate.

40 But she is happier, if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also, that I have the Spirit of God.

40

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 25

Let us observe the humility of the excellent apostle with pleasure. When he speaks of his fidelity in the ministry, he tells us, *he obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.* Edified by such an example, let us ascribe to Christ the praise, not only of our endowments, but our virtues; even to him *who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.*

29

Let us seriously contemplate the affecting lesson which the apostle here gives of the shortness of time; and infer how much

[1] *I appear to have the Spirit of God.*] It is very unreasonable for any to infer from hence, that St. Paul was uncertain whether he was inspired or not. Whereas this is only a modest way of speaking; and δοκω εχειν, often signifies the same with εχω. Compare Luke viii. 18; with Mat. xiii. 12; 1 Cor. x. 12; chap. xiv. 37. And the ambiguity in the expression, *appear to have*, seems exactly to correspond to the ambiguity of this original phrase.

SECT. XIV.

it is our wisdom to loosen our affections from the things of this vain world, which are ready to ingross so disproportionate a share in them. Let us look upon the world as a transient pageant, and not set our eyes and our hearts on that which is not. (Verse 30) We expect, instead of these transitory vanities and empty shews, (31) *a kingdom that cannot be moved*; in the expectation of which (32) let us be solicitous to *please the Lord*; making the best of our opportunities, and guarding against all that may unnecessarily divert our minds, and divide our cares, from what will at length appear *the one thing needful.*

Let us attentively reflect upon the advantages and snares of our respective conditions in life; that we may improve the one, and escape, as far as possible, all injury from the other. Let those who are single, employ their leisure for God; and endeavour to collect a stock of Christian experience which may support them, when the duties and difficulties, the cares and sorrows of life, may be multiplied. (33, 34) Let those who are married, with mutual tender regard endeavour to please each other, and make the relation into which Providence hath conducted them, as comfortable and agreeable as they can. And whatever cares press upon their minds, or demand their attention, let them order their affairs with such discretion, that they may still secure a due proportion of their time for the things of the Lord.

(35-38) If any in their consciences are persuaded, that by continuing single they shall best answer the purposes of religion, and promote the good of their fellow creatures, in conjunction with their own; let them do it. As for those that marry, whether (39) a first, or a second time, let them do it in the Lord; acting in the choice of their most intimate friend and companion, as the servants of Christ; who are desirous that their conduct may be approved by him, and that any avocations and interruptions in his service, which may be occasioned, even in those peaceful times, by marriage, may be, in some measure, balanced, by the united prayers, prudent counsels, and edifying converse of those with whom they unite in this tender and indissoluble bond.

SECT. XV.

The Apostle proceeds to consider the case of eating things sacrificed to idols; and reminds them, that though all Christians might well be supposed to know the vanity of those imaginary deities to which they were offered, yet it might prove an occasion of grief and scandal, that the professors of Christianity should partake of these sacrifices in their temple; which therefore

charity would require them by all means to avoid. 1 Cor. VIII. *throughout.*

1 CORINTHIANS VIII. 1.

1 COR. VIII. 1.
NOW as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up but charity edifieth.

SECT. XV.

1 Cor. VIII. 1.

I *NOW* proceed to consider the other cases about which you consulted me; particularly that *concerning things sacrificed to idols*: and here it may be observed, that *we know, we all have*, as Christians, that general *knowledge* of the vanity of those fictitious deities of which some are ready to boast, as if it were an extraordinary matter, and which they sometimes are in danger of abusing, by making it the foundation of liberties which may be very detrimental. But let it be remembered, that *knowledge* often *puffeth up*,[a] and is the occasion of great self-conceit and arrogance: *whereas* it is considerate *love*, and gentle tenderness, that *edifies* and has such a happy effect in building up the church of Christ. *And* indeed, *if any one think that he knoweth any thing*, if he be conceited of his knowledge, so as to neglect and despise his brethren, and upon account of his supposed superiority in that respect, set a very high value upon himself, it appears, that *he as yet knows nothing as he ought to know it*, and needs to be taught the very first and most essential principles of that knowledge which is truly ornamental and useful. *But if any man love God*, and shew it by a steady regard for the Divine glory, and the good of his brethren, *he is* indeed *known of him*;[b] this man hath attained the true knowledge of God, and will be sure of his approbation and favour. *Therefore*, to proceed to the question in debate, *concerning the eating of the things sacrificed to idols, we well know that an idol* [*is*] in itself *nothing in the world*,[c] but a

2 And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

3 But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

4 As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world,

[a] *Knowledge puffeth up.*] Elsner, (Observ. Vol. II. p. 96,) acknowledges that as Bos, and Erasmus Schmidius, contend, there is a parenthesis here; but he thinks it begins in the middle of the first verse, and ends after the first clause of the 4th, *we have all knowledge—we know that an idol is nothing, &c.*

[b] *He is known of him.*] Most understand it, *he is approved by God*; as to *know*, sometimes undoubtedly signifies. Mr. Locke would render it, *he is instructed by him.* But I acquiesce in Mr. Pierce's reasoning in his 6th Dissertation, to prove the construction followed in the paraphrase, by a construction like that of the original of Acts x. 36, where οὗτος plainly refers to the immediate *antecedent.*

[c] *We know that an idol is nothing in the world.*] Dr. Whitby shews this was a common aphorism among the Jewish doctors, to which the word אלילים, the name

SECT. XV.

I Cor. VIII. 4

mass of senseless matter, and when regarded in a religious view, so empty a vanity, that it deserves not to be named among the things that exist. *And we all know that* [*there is*] indeed *no other God, but* that *one* glorious and transcendant Being, to which the gospel hath taught 5 us to appropriate our worship. *For though there are* many *which are called gods, whether* residing *in heaven, or on earth*, or even under the earth; for the heathens have not only their celestial and terrestrial, but likewise their infernal deities: *as there are many gods, and many lords*, who are in their various subordinations adored by the Gentiles, and have great though very absurd 6 worship paid to them: *Nevertheless, to us* [*there is but*] *one God, the Father*[d] of angels and men, *from whom* [*are*] *all things* in created nature; *and we* derived our being from him, were made *for him*, and for his glory: *and* there is also but *one Lord*, even *Jesus Christ*, the only Mediator between God and man, *by whom* [*are*] *all things* created, supported, and guided; *and we by him*, thankfully owning ourselves obliged to his agency and care for all we are, and have, or hope to obtain. These are grand principles, in which all intelligent Christians are agreed; and it would be happy, if they kept them steadily and consistently in view.

and that *there is* none other God but one.

5 For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

6 But to us *there is but* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we in him: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him.

7 You are possessed of these apprehensions of things: it is well; *But* you ought to remember, that [*there is*] *not in all men this knowledge*. Some Christian converts may not sufficiently apprehend this; *but* may imagine there is really some invisible spirit present in the idol, and acting by and upon it. And in consequence of this, *some do, even until now, with consciousness of* some religious regard to *the idol, eat the*

7 Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some, with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it

given them did probably allude. Mons. Saurin thinks it so hard to reconcile this with what the apostle says elsewhere, that he judges it necessary to understand this as an objection made by one of the Corinthians, with whom he is disputing, Saur. Disc. Vol. II. p. 476—481. But I cannot from an impartial view of the context, give into this interpretation. See Elsner's learned note here on εἴδωλον and *Simulachrum*

[d] *One God, the Father.*] In answer to the argument drawn from hence against the Deity of Christ, see Dr. Guyse on this place; and Dr. Edm. Calamy's Serm. on the Trinity, p. 25 and 244. The Person, to whom the *Son*, as Lord or Mediator, introduces us, is undoubtedly the *Father*; nor is the *Son*, to be considered as *another God*. But it is not the design of these notes largely to discuss theological controversies.

as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak, is defiled.

things in question, *as* what is *sacrificed to the idol*, intending thereby to pay some homage; *and* so *their conscience being* too *weak* to withstand a temptation to what in these circumstances, is really evil, *is defiled*, and brought under a grievous and terrifying load of guilt.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse.

8 *But* why should we occasion this inconvenience? For we know, that *meat commends us not*, in any degree, *to* the acceptance and favour of *God*; *for neither are we the better, if we eat, nor the worse, if we eat not.* The great God does not so much esteem a man for being, or disapprove him for not being, superior to such little scruples: but the tenderness of his conscience, together with the zeal and charity of his heart, are the grand qualities he regards.

9 But take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.

9 *But take heed, lest this* power and *liberty of yours, be by any means a stumbling-block*, and occasion of sin, *to the weak*, with whom you converse, or who observe your conduct, perhaps with more regard than you pay to it yourselves.

10 For if any man see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

10 *For if any one see thee, who hast* this boasted *knowledge, sitting down* to an entertainment *in an idol's temple*,* as freely as thou wouldest in thine own house, and partaking of his sacrifices as cheerfully as if they were the common provisions of thine own table; though this may indeed arise from that sovereign contempt in which thou holdest that idle fiction of deity: can he know that situation of thy mind? And *will not the conscience of him that is* thus *weak*, and who perhaps feels some scruples in his own mind about it, *be encouraged* by thy example *to eat of the idol-sacrifice* with some sentiments of superstitious regard?

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

11 *And so shall the weak brother, for whom* the Lord Jesus *Christ* himself *died*, be liable to *perish by thy knowledge*, in this instance, mischievous rather than useful: so that when thou makest a vain ostentation of it, thou

* *Sitting down* to an entertainment *in an idol's temple.*] How commonly entertainments among the heathen consisted of what had been sacrificed to their fictitious deities, and how religiously the Christians abstained from them even when most rigorously imposed, Elsner has shewn by many very apposite citations; (Observ. Vol. II. p. 96;) and no doubt the apostle's decision here, had great weight with them. That these feasts were often celebrated in their temples, the same learned critic has abundantly shewn, in his notes on this clause; and it is strange that Chemnitius, and Erasmus, should ever have doubted it.

SECT. XV. 1 Cor. VIII. 12

dost in effect pride thyself in thy brother's ruin. Imagine not this to be an inconsiderable evil; *but* on the contrary, rather know, that *when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak consciences*, leading them into guilt, and hazarding their salvation, *you* greatly *sin against Christ;* who had such a tenderness for souls, that he died to redeem them, and hath done all that example, or precept, can do, to make his followers enter into such humane and compassionate views.

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

13 *Therefore* it is a determined point with me, upon these principles, that *if meat* of any kind *scandalize my brother*, and lead him into sin, *I* would not only abstain, now and then, from this or that agreeable food, but *would never as long as I live,*[f] *eat* any sort of *flesh*. I would subsist entirely on vegetables, *that I may not scandalize* and ensnare *my brother;* if there be no other way of avoiding it. Of such importance should I esteem the preservation of one endangered soul. And herein I wish that God may give you the like self-denial, both for your own sakes, and for the peace and honour of the Christian church.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1 Let us learn from this short, but excellent chapter, to estimate the true value of knowledge, and to see how worthless and dangerous it is, when, instead of discovering to us our own ignorance and weakness, it serves only to puff up the mind. Let us rather labour and pray for that love and *charity which edifieth* ourselves and others; taking heed, that we do not demonstrate 2 *our ignorance*, by a *high conceit of our* attainments in knowledge; for nothing can more evidently shew, how small those attainments are, than not to know their limits, when these limits so soon meet us, on what side soever we attempt to make an 3 excursion. "Give us, O Lord, that love to thee which is the "best proof of our knowledge, and the surest way to its high- "est improvements!"

4, 5 Let us always remember the grand principle of the *unity of God;* and with the *one God and Father* of all adore the *one*

[f] *As long as I live:* εις τον αιωνα.] We render it, *as long as the world stands.* But the sense plainly limits the expression, (which might simply have been rendered *never*,) to the sense here given.

Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we exist; setting him in our estimation far above all the powers, dignities, and glories, of created nature.

SECT. XV.

Verse 8

Belonging to so Divine a Master, let us endeavour to learn the most generous principles of true religion. Let us not found our confidence on admitting, and contending for, or despising, and deriding, this or that particular observance, by which, as it may happen to be circumstanced, God is neither honoured, nor dishonoured, pleased, nor displeased. But let us ever maintain the tenderest concern for the edification and comfort of our brethren; and guard against whatever might either grieve or ensnare them 9 Let us remember, that Christ died for the weakest as well as the 11 strongest; and let their relation to him, and his tender and compassionate regard for them, melt down our hearts, when seized with that cold insensibility, which, alas, is too ready to prevail amongst Christians! It is Christ we wound, in wounding our bre- 12 thren; and in smiting them, we smite him.

Let us then stay that rash hand which is so ready in mere wantonness to do mischief; and be willing to deny ourselves in any desire, for ever so long a time, rather than by our indulgence 13 to dishonour God, and injure others. This is the excellent lesson St. Paul often inculcates, of which he was an eminent and illustrious example. But O, how low are multitudes of Christians, multitudes of ministers fallen, when they cannot deny themselves in what is unnecessary, and even unlawful, where either interest or pleasure solicit the gratification!

SECT. XVI.

The Apostle, proposing to illustrate his condescension to the weak, by his waving to accept of a maintenance from the Corinthians, introduces what he had to say on that head with a short discourse on the right which, as a gospel minister he really had, to be supported by those among whom he laboured; which he argues both from natural equity and scripture-principle. 1 Cor. IX. 1—14.

1 CORINTHIANS IX. 1.

1 COR. IX. 1.

AM I not an apostle?

WHILE I thus speak of the concern I have to avoid what may prove an occasion of injury to weak brethren, it leads my thoughts to the part I have acted, while I resided among you in declining to take that maintenance from you which I might very justly have expected and demanded. And here you must give me leave to express my surprise, as well as my con-

SECT. XVI.

1 Cor. IX 1.

cern, to hear, that so unkind and unnatural a construction has been put upon my generosity and tenderness, as if I had declined to accept your contribution, from a consciousness of not being intitled to them as well as my brethren. But can you really imagine that to be the case? *Am not I*, as truly as any man living, *an apostle* of Jesus Christ? *Am not I* as *free* in this instance, as any other, and may I not, as justly as they, expect to be maintained by you, while I am serving your best interests? *Have not I*, though called so much later than my brethren, *seen Jesus Christ our Lord*[a], after his resurrection, so as to be able to testify the important fact on my own knowledge, as confidently as those that were earlier acquainted with him? And, to urge so plain a point no farther, *are not ye* Corinthians, particularly, *my work in the Lord*, and the evident token of his blessing on

am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not you my work in the Lord?

2 my apostolical labours? On this account, *if I am not an apostle to* some *others, yet I doubtless am so to you*, who of all people in the world can shew the least excuse for questioning my mission: *for ye are* indeed *the seal of my apostleship in the Lord;* and the extraordinary success I have had among you, if others should doubt of my commission, might furnish out a proof of it also to them.

2 If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord.

3 *This* therefore *is my apology to those who examine* and censure *me*, as to this part of my conduct. Does my waving the use of a privilege

3 Mine answer to them that do examine me, is this,

4 prove that I have it not? *Have we not*, both in natural equity, and according to the Divine constitution, the same *power*, as others in the same office, *to eat and to drink*, and to subsist ourselves at the expence of those among whom

4 Have we not power to eat and to drink?

5 we labour? Yea, *have we not power to lead about* [*with us*] in our apostolical travels, (if we think it necessary,) *a sister*, whom we might take for *a wife*[b], *as* some of *the other apostles*

5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles

[a] *Have not I seen the Lord*, &c.] That this was necessary, in order to his being an apostle, that is, *a witness of Christ's resurrection*, has before been observed. See Vol. II. p. 594, note s. Compare Acts xxii. 14, 15, chap. xxvi. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 8.

[b] *A sister, a wife.*] The word γυναικα, has no force at all here, if it be rendered *a woman: a sister* must undoubtedly be a *woman:* not to say, how improbable it is that the apostle should have carried about with him, in these sacred perigrinations, a woman to whom he was not married. So that the answer which the Papists make to the argument often brought from these words, in favour of a married clergy, is absolutely inconclusive.

SECT. XVI.

1 Cor. IX. 5.

and *as* the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?

and the brethren of the Lord do, *and Peter*[c] in particular; and to expect, that she likewise, as well as ourselves, should be provided for by those to whom we have done such important services, as nothing of this kind can ever requite?

6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

6 *Or* can it be thought there is any thing singular in my case, or in that of my present companions, that it *should* rob me of the liberties others have; so that *I only, and Barnabas,*[d] should *not have power to decline working* with our own hands for a maintenance, while we are preaching the gospel?

7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

7 I might here insist indeed on the natural equity of the thing, that they who devote themselves to the service of the public, should be supported by the public whom they serve. *Who*, for instance, *ever goes to war at his own charge?* The community furnishes out provision for those who guard it, and fight its battles. And if the services of a soldier deserve that maintenance, which, while engaged in the defence of their country, men cannot earn, how much more may it be expected by us, who daily hazard our lives as well as wear them out for men's everlasting happiness? *Who planteth a vineyard, and doth not* expect to *eat of its fruit? Or who feedeth a flock, and doth not* think he hath a right to *eat of the milk of the flock?* And if it be judged reasonable, that men should have an equivalent for their labours about natural things, and the accommodations of the body, is it not more evidently so, when the felicity of immortal souls is concerned?

8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?

8 But *do I speak these things* merely *as a man*, upon principles of human reason alone, *and doth not the* Jewish *law speak also the same? For*

9 For it is written

9 there is a passage in the sacred volume, on which

[c] *And Peter.*] This is an important clause, both as it declares in effect that St. Peter continued to live with his wife after he became an apostle; and also that St. Peter had no rights, as an apostle, which were not common to St. Paul. A remark utterly subversive of popery, if traced to its obvious consequences.

[d] *I only, and Barnabas.*] From this expression one would indeed think, that the Judaizing Christians, who were the main cause of St. Paul's uneasiness in this respect, had a peculiar spleen against those two apostles of the uncircumcision; who were so instrumental in procuring and publishing the Jerusalem decree, which determined the controversy so directly in favour of the believing Gentiles.—It seems probable from the 12th verse that Barnabas supported himself by the labour of his hands, when at Corinth, as well as St. Paul.

SECT. XVI.

1 Cor. IX. 9.

the like argument may be built, (I mean, Deut. xxv. 4) where *it is written*, even *in the law of Moses* itself, for which some have so distinguishing a regard, "*Thou shalt not muzzle the ox* "*that treadeth out the corn*,"* but shalt allow the poor animal to feed, while it is labouring for thee, in the midst of food: a circumstance in which its hunger would be peculiarly pain-
10 ful. Now *is God* so *solicitous about oxen*, that he intended this precept merely for their relief? *Or doth he say* [*this*] with a farther view, and *on the whole*,† *for our sakes? Surely*, we may conclude, he intended such precepts as these, relating to compassion to the brutes, in some measure at least *for our sakes;* to humanize the heart with generous and compassionate sentiments, and to make men much more tender to each other, where their various interests are concerned. I may therefore apply it to the case before us, as entirely comprehended in his extensive universal views; and say, for us indeed *was* [*it*] *written*, that the necessary offices of life might be more cheerfully performed, in the expectation of such due acknowledgments; *that he, who ploweth, might plow in hope* of success, *and that he who thresheth in* such *hope*, should not be disappointed, but *should* in proper time *partake of his hope*, and possess the good for which he has laboured. And surely amidst his care for others who are in meaner offices of life, God could not intend, that the ministers of the gospel alone should be sunk under continual discouragement, neglect, and ill-usage.

11 And indeed when we consider what great benefactors these persons are to the souls amongst whom they labour with success, the reasonableness of the conclusion will appear beyond all contradiction. For *if we*, by our incessant diligence in preaching to you the gospel of the blessed God, *have sown unto you spiritual things*,

in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: That he that ploweth, should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope.

11 If we have sown unto you spiri-

* *That treadeth out the corn.*] It is well known that this was the custom in Judea, and other eastern nations. It is still retained by many of them and particularly in Ceylon. Raphelius has produced passages from Xenophon, which something illustrate it.

† *On the whole.*] It cannot be thought that God had no regard at all to the brute-creatures, in such precepts as these; and therefore I thought it better to render παντως, *on the whole*, than *entirely* or *altogether*, though that sense is more frequent.

SECT. XVI.

1 Cor. IX. 11.

tual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

which may spring up in a harvest of eternal blessings, [*is it*] *any great matter that we* should *reap your carnal things?* Is there the least proportion between any thing which your liberality can impart to us, and that which we have been the happy instruments of imparting to you?

12 If others be partakers of *this* power over you, *are* not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power, but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

12 This is the privilege of ministers in general, and it is a privilege which you well know some of them have exerted. And *if others* are so readily allowed to *partake of* [*this*] *power over you*,[g] [*shall*] *not we rather* claim it, with yet more evident and apparent reason, who have been the means, not only of edifying and instructing you, but likewise of calling you into the profession of Christianity? *But we have not made use of this power*, though founded in such evident and various principles of equity. *But we* rather choose to *endure all things*, the fatigues of labour, and inconveniencies of frequent necessity, *that we may not occasion any hindrance to the gospel of Christ*,[h] from the cavils of ill-disposed people, who are always watchful for opportunities to misrepresent and censure our conduct.

13 Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things, live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar?

13 But though I do not now ask any thing of this kind for myself, yet I will not give up the justice of the demand. And I might farther support it, from the provision which God made for the priests and Levites, under the Mosaic law. *Know ye not* therefore, *that they who are employed about holy things, are fed out of* the provisions which belong to *the temple*, *and* [*that*] *they who wait upon the* service of the *altar*, *are partakers with the altar*, in a part of the victims offered on it, particularly the vows and the sacrifices of peace-offerings: And it is

14 Even so hath

14 farther to be considered, that *so also*, that is, on

g *Partaker of* [*this*] *power*, &c.] Mr Pyle thinks this refers to the other apostles of Christ, but I rather think St. Paul intended to glance on the false teachers who carried their claims of this right to such an exorbitant height, though their services had been by no means comparable to those of the apostle. Compare 2 Cor. xi. 20.—Mr. Locke would here read *οὐσίας ὑμῶν*, *of your substance*; but Mat. x. 1, John xvii. 2; and many other places, prove that *ἐξουσίας ὑμῶν*, may probably be rendered *power over you*.

h *Hindrance to the gospel.*] From the conduct of the other apostles, and of St. Paul at other places, particularly among the Macedonian churches, we may conclude, that he might see some circumstances at Corinth, (not necessary for us exactly to know,) which determined him to decline accepting of any subsistence from them while he resided there.

SECT. XVI.

1 Cor. ix. 14.

principles like these, *the Lord* Jesus Christ himself, *hath* expressly commanded and *ordained that they who preach the gospel should live* and subsist *upon the gospel*,[1] when he declares, as you know more than one of the evangelists assures us he did, "that the labourer is worthy of his hire." Compare Mat. x. 10; Luke x. 7.

the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1-7

MAY the disciples of Christ learn from these instructions, *to honour the Lord with their substance, and the first fruits of all their increase!* And may they feel those happy effects attending the ministration of the gospel, and reap such an abundant har-

11

vest of spiritual blessings, that the imparting temporal subsistence and accommodation, to those who are the instruments of conveying them, may not be matter of constraint, but of free and affectionate choice! May the ministers of Christ, while they thankfully accept of that subsistence, which Providence, by the instrumentality of their brethren, sends them, ever act a moderate and generous part, and maintain such a visible superiority to all secular views, as may do an honour to the gospel, and command veneration to themselves!

May the secular advantages of the office never invite bad men into it; nor its discouragements deter good men from undertaking it. And whatever censures a malignant world, who themselves know not any higher motive than self-interest, shall pass, may the ministers of Jesus ever have a testimony in their consciences, *that they seek not the properties, but the souls*, of their hearers!

8-10

Let us attend to the humane genius of the Mosaic law, manifested in the precepts which relate even to the brutes. And remember, that it is the character, and should be the care of a merciful man, to extend mercy to his beast. Much more then let us shew compassion to our fellow-men. Let us not desire to enjoy the benefit of their labours, even in the lowest employments of life, without giving them some valuable equivalent. Let us bear towards all, the hearts of equitable and generous brethren, and constantly wish the prosperity and happiness of the human family. On the whole, may there be between the

[1] *Live upon the gospel.*] Mr Mede understands εὐαγγέλιον here, of *the reward given for bringing a good message*, (see Diatrib. in loc.) and shews that the word sometimes has that meaning in heathen authors: but it is a very uncommon signification in the sacred, and therefore not to be admitted without farther proof.— That man might be said *to live on the gospel*, who was maintained for preaching it, as he might be said to live *on the temple*, who was to be supported out of its income, for ministering there, though the word temple has the usual signification.

teachers, and those who are taught by them, a continued intercourse of benevolent affections, and friendly actions; as becomes those who stand in such an endearing relation to each other, and have, as Christians, the honour of being intimately related to that blessed Redeemer, who *sought not his own* things, but *ours*, and hath thereby laid the strongest engagement upon us, if we have any spark of gratitude and honour, *not to seek our own things, but his!*

SECT. XVI.

SECT. XVII.

The Apostle illustrates the condescension and tenderness of his conduct towards the Corinthians, in declining to accept of their contributions; and speaks of his self-denial under a very expressive simile, taken from those who contended in those Grecian games with which they were familiarly acquainted. 1 Cor. IX. 15. *to the end.*

1 COR. IX. 15.

BUT I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.

16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!

1 CORINTHIANS IX. 15.

SECT. XVII.

1 Cor. IX. 15.

I HAVE thought it my duty, in the foregoing discourse, to plead the natural and the evangelical rights which the ministers of the gospel have to be maintained by the people, to whose spiritual edification they give their time and labours. *But* you well know that *I myself* during my abode among you, *have used none of these things; nor have I written thus, that,* if, according to my purpose and hope, I ever should visit you again, *it should* hereafter *be so done unto me.* I think of the generous and self-denying part, which I have acted among you, in declining, *for* some particular reasons, to take a maintenance, with a pleasure so great, that I may even say, [*it were*] *better for me to die* for want of the necessary supplies of life, *than that any man* among you *should make* this *my boasting void*, by having it to say, that I have eaten his bread, and been supported at his expence.

16 *For if I preach the gospel*, after what hath happened in my singular case, *I have no* [*matter of*] *boasting* in that, *for*, having received such a commission, how could I refuse! I may say, *a* kind of invincible *necessity lieth upon me*, *and woe to me* indeed, *if I preach not the gospel.* To decline a work assigned to me by so condescending an appearance of Christ, when with

SECT. XVI.

malicious rage I was attempting to destroy his church, would be an instance of ingratitude and obstinacy, deserving the most dreadful and insupportable condemnation. *If indeed I do this voluntarily*, and shew upon every occasion a cordial willingness to do it, *I have* indeed some room to expect *a reward*; *but if* I do it *unwillingly*, as I said before, *a dispensation is intrusted to me*, and I must of necessity fulfil it.

1 Cor. IX. 17.

18 *What then is* that circumstance in *my* conduct, for which I may expect a *reward* of praise from the mouth of my Divine Master? *Surely* this, *that when I preach the gospel of Christ, I may render it unexpensive, that so I may* be sure *not* in the least degree to *abuse my power in the gospel* to any low and secular purposes, or carry it

19 beyond its due bounds. *For* in this respect, *being free from all men*, and under no obligation, in this manner, to give them my labours, *I made myself the servant of all*[a], addicting myself to the most fatiguing duties, *that I might* advance their happiness, and *gain the more* to true religion and salvation; in which I have found a noble equivalent for all I could do, or

20 bear. *And* I not only submitted to preach the gospel without any reward, but I made it a constant maxim, to accommodate my manner of living to the way and relish of those about me, sacrificing my own humour and inclination, and that, in some instances, when I could not do it, without considerable inconvenience to myself: accordingly, *to the Jews I became as a Jew*[b], *that I might gain* over more of *the Jews* to Christianity: *to those*, I say, *who were*, or apprehended themselves to be, *under the* tedious ceremonies and disagreeable restraints of the Mosaic *law*, I became, *as* if I were still in conscience *under the* obligations of the *law*[c],

17 For if I do this thing willingly I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation *of the gospel* is committed unto me.

18 What is my reward then? verily that when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law.

[a] *The servant of all.*] This has a stronger sense than can easily be expressed [illegible] paraphrase, and intimates, th[illegible] with as self-denying a re[illegible] interests, and as much cau[illegible] offend them, as if he were ab[illegible] their power, as a slave is in [illegible] his master.

[b] [illegible] *the Jews*, &c.] Compare, for the [illegible] of this, Acts xvi. 3. chap. xxi. 21, &c. which instances were undoubtedly a specimen of many more of the like kind.

[c] *As* if *I were still under the obligations of the law.*] This can only signify that he voluntarily complied with it, as *an indifferent thing*; but it cannot by any means imply, that he declared such observance necessary, or refused to converse with any, who would not conform to

SECT. XVII.

1 Cor. IX. 21.

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

though I knew it to have been abolished; and this, that I might gain those who apprehended themselves to be *under the* bond of that *law*. On the other hand, *to those* who were *without the law* of Moses, and either unacquainted with it, or apprehended themselves under no obligation to conform to its peculiar institutions, I behaved *as* if I had myself also been *without the law*, neglecting its ceremonial precepts, which I well knew to be superseded and abolished. [*Yet*] still taking care that it might appear both from my word and actions, that I was *not without law to God; but* apprehended myself *under a law* of the most affectionate duty and gratitude *to Christ*, who came by new bonds to engage us to the strictest obedience. But those freedoms I used, and this moderation I manifested, not by any means for my own indulgence, but *that I might gain those* who are *without the law*[d], and make my ministry more agreeable and useful to such as were educated among the Gentiles.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

I therefore *became to the weak, as* if I had been as *weak* and scrupulous as they, in the various articles of food and dress which might come into question, *that I might gain* upon *the weak*, for the soul of the weakest appeared to me infinitely valuable; and I have the warrant of my great Master to esteem it more precious than all the treasures of the world. In a word, *I became all things to all men:* accommodating myself to them, so far as with a safe conscience I could, *that by any*, or all *means* if possible, *I might save some:* and it is the daily grief of my soul, that after all these efforts the number is so small.

23 And this I do for the gospel's-sake, that I might be partaker thereof with *you*.

And this I do for the sake of the gospel, to promote its success to the utmost of my ability; *that I* also *may be a sharer in* the generous pleasure arising from the communication of *it*[e].

them, for this was the very dissimulation, which, with so generous a freedom, he condemned in St. Peter, Gal. ii. 14, &c.

d *That I might gain those without the law.*] This seems to imply, that the Gentiles not yet converted to Christianity, are here referred to; unless gaining the person spoken of signifies, rendering them "better disposed to regard his decisions," which is at most but a subordinate sense.

e *A sharer in the communication of it.*] We render it, *that I might be partaker with you*, but as the words, *with you*, are not in the original, which is ἵνα συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι, I rather understand the

SECT. XVII.

1 Cor. IX. 24.

I may illustrate this, by referring to the games so well known in Greece; and particularly to the Isthmian, so often celebrated among you at Corinth. *Do you not know, that with respect to those who run in the* stadium or foot *race*[f], *all indeed run*, and, contend with each other whereas *but one receiveth the prize*[g]? Yet the uncertain hope, that each may be that one, animates them all to strain every nerve in the course You have much greater encouragement to exert yourselves in the pursuit of celestial blessings See to it therefore, that ye *so run as that ye may obtain*, and that ye lay aside every thing that would be an incumbrance to you, or render you incapable of dispatching

25 the race with necessary vigour and alacrity *And every one who contendeth* in the games, whether in running, as above, or in wrestling, or combating, *is temperate in all things*[h], abstaining from whatever might enervate his strength, and submitting to a regular course of diet, exercise and hardship, that he may be the more capable of exerting himself with success [*And this*] *they indeed* [*do*,] *that they may obtain a corruptible crown*[i], a garland of leaves, that will soon

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown,

words as referring to the satisfaction he found in imparting the invaluable and inexhaustible blessings of the gospel to all around him, a sentiment most suitable to his character and office

[f] *The stadium or foot-race.*] On comparing the translation I had before made of this passage with that of my learned and worthy friend Mr West, (in his excellent dissertation on the Olympic Games, p 189, 190,) I had the pleasure to find a remarkable agreement, but where there was any difference I have generally altered what I had written, either in the version or paraphrase, to make it conformable to his, whose judgment, in any point of criticism, has with me great weight, but especially on a subject of which he appears to have been so eminent a master, that his writings upon it are as distinguished in their kind, as the games he so elegantly describes were in theirs

[g] *One receiveth the prize.*] It is true, that in some games there were several prizes of different value, yet in those to which he here refers, there was but one to the victor, and the argument is very strong and striking

[h] *Temperate in all things.*] Whoever considers on the one hand, to what great self-denial in articles of food, sleep, and every other sensual indulgence, they, who were to contend in their games, were obliged and on the other, of how great importance it is that the youth of a community should be formed to a manly taste, and resolute self-government, will undoubtedly see the great national prudence of the Greeks, in the institution and support of these games: to which it is very probable their remarkable valour and success in war, during the best days of their several republics might in some considerable degree be owing See, for the illustration of the temperance here referred to, Elsner's excellent note on this text, and Ælian, Var Hist lib III cap 30 lib X cap. 2

[i] *Corruptible crown, a garland of leaves, &c.*] It is well known, that the crown in the Olympic games sacred to Jupiter, was of wild olive, in the Pythian, sacred to Apollo, of laurel, in the Isthmian or Corinthian solemnized in honour of Palæmon, of pine-tree, and in the Nemean, of smallage or parsley Now the most of these were ever-greens, yet they

but we an incorruptible.

wither and perish: *but we* are animated by the view of *an incorruptible* crown, the duration and glory of which, will be commensurate to the existence of our immortal souls.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

26 It is no small pleasure to me, while I am exhorting you to this, to reflect that I am, through Divine grace, myself an example of the temperance I recommend. *I for my part run not, as one who is to pass undistinguished;*[k] but knowing what eyes are upon me, and solicitous to gain the approbation of my Judge, and attending with diligence and care to the boundaries which are marked out to us, I exert myself to the utmost. *I so fight, not as one that beats the air,*[l] who fights as it were with his own shadow, or practises a feigned combat; but as one who has a real and living enemy to contend with, and who knowing that his life and his all is in question, would strike sure, and not lose his blows upon empty air.

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjec-

27 Thus I allow not myself in a habit of indolence and luxury, *but* imitate on a much nobler occasion, and to a much greater degree, the self-denial of the combatants I mentioned above; *I bruise and mortify my body,*[m] *and bring it into* such a degree *of servitude* as the superior interests of my soul require. And this I judge a most ne-

would grow dry, and break to pieces Elsner, (Observ. Vol II p. 103,) produces many passages in which the contenders in these exercises are rallied by the Grecian wits, for the extraordinary pains they took for such trifling rewards, and Plato has a celebrated passage, which greatly resembles this of St Paul, but by no means equals it in beauty and force.

[k] *I run not as one that is to pass undistinguished*] Τρεχειν αδηλως, is *to run unnoticed* But as some have explained it of "running without attending to the "marks and lines which determined "the path," I have hinted at that sense As for Heinsius's interpretation, who explains it "moving so slowly, as that he "might seem to stand still," it is like many others, peculiar to that writer, quite insupportable: no one, in such a circumstance, could be said to run at all.

[l] *Beats the air, &c.*] In order to attain the greater agility and dexterity, it was usual for those who intended to box in the games, to exercise their arms with the gauntlet on, when they had no antagonist near them, and this was called σκιομαχια, in which a man would of course *beat the air* But Bos has taken a great deal of pains in his note here, to shew, that it is a proverbial expression for a man's *missing his blow*, and spending it, not on his enemy, but on empty air.

[m] Bruise and *mortify my body*] Υπωπιαζω, properly signifies *to strike on the face* as boxers did, and particularly on (the ὑπωπιον,) the part of it under the eyes, at which they especially aimed. Hence it comes to signify a *livid tumour* on that part, and sometimes it is proverbially used for a face terribly bruised, mortified, and disfigured, like that of a boxer just come from the combat, as Bos has shewn at large, Exercit. p 138, &c.

SECT. XVII. 1 Cor. IX. 27.

cessary precaution, *lest after having served as a herald to others*, and after having made proclamation of the glorious rewards to be attained, and endeavoured to animate their zeal in the pursuit, *I should myself be disapproved*[n] of the great Judge, and finally declared unworthy of obtaining a share in them.

tion, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast away.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 16, 18. LET us learn, by the example of the apostle, a generous ambition of excelling in religion. Not of doing more indeed, than our duty, for we owe God our best, and our all, but abounding in it to the utmost, carrying our love, our zeal, and our obedience, to the highest degree we can attain, and preserving an honest readiness to know our duty, even in circumstances in which there might be some plausible excuse for overlooking it. In particular, let the ministers of the gospel not think it much to their praise, to perform those services which it would be shameful and almost impossible for them to neglect, but labour to acquit themselves in the very best manner they can, shewing in the whole of their conduct, that they are not animated only, or chiefly, by secular motives, in the labours they bestow upon the souls of men.

19, 22. They are peculiarly concerned to learn and imitate this condescension of the apostle, *in becoming all things to all men, if by any means he might gain some*. But they are not the only persons who are interested in this. It is the duty of every Christian, to endeavour *to please his neighbours* and brethren for their good; and it will be our wisdom, and happiness, upon such generous principles, to learn to govern and deny ourselves.

We are all called to engage in the most important race, in the

[n] *Lest after having served as an herald, I should be disapproved.*] I thought it of importance to retain the primitive sense of these gymnastic expressions. It is well known to those who are at all acquainted with the original, that the word κηρυξας, expresses the discharging the office of an *herald*, whose business it was to proclaim the conditions of the games and display the prizes, to awaken the emulation and resolution of those who were to contend in them. But the apostle intimates that there was this peculiar circumstance attending the Christian contest, that the person who proclaimed its laws and rewards to others was also to engage himself, and that there would be a peculiar infamy and misery in miscarrying in such a circumstance. Αδοκιμος, which we render *cast-away*, signifies one, who is *disapproved* by the judge of the games, as not having fairly deserved the prize. Mr Fleming, arguing that St Paul knew his own sincere piety, and consequently might be assured of his future happiness, maintains that *to be cast away* here signifies being judged unworthy of a part in the first resurrection. (Fleming's Discourse on the first Resurrect. p. 89.) But it appears to me much more natural to refer it to the whole Christian reward, as it is certain God engages his people to persevere, by awful threatenings against apostacy, as well as by the promises of eternal life, to those who continue faithful and constant.

most noble combat. The children of this world fatigue themselves for trifles, and exert the noble faculties of an immortal spirit, to purposes far beneath its dignity. But all is not vanity. Every crown is not withering and corruptible. We have heard of an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.* And whatever there was in the prospect to awaken these Corinthians, still remains to awaken and animate us. Let us therefore keep our eyes and our hearts fixed upon it, and be in good earnest in what we do; often looking to the marks which are drawn in the word of God; realizing to ourselves the certain existence, and formidable character, of our invisible enemies; suspecting especially ourselves, fearing the treachery of our own corruptions, and using all that mortification which may promote our spiritual life and usefulness.

SECT. XVII. Verse 24—26

Who would not tremble, how high soever his profession, or office may be—who would not tremble to hear St. Paul insinuate a supposed *possibility, that after having preached to others,* and made such animating proclamations of the heavenly prize to them, *he might himself be rejected,* as unqualified to receive it? Let us learn from it humility and caution; learn to watch against dangers, which will still surround us, as long as we dwell in this body; and rejoice in the guardianship of Christ, who will at length *deliver* his faithful servants *from every evil work, and preserve them to his heavenly kingdom.*

27

SECT. XVIII.

Farther to awaken that holy caution which the Apostle had suggested in the preceding section, he here represents to the Corinthians, on the one hand, the privileges which Israel of old enjoyed, and on the other, the Divine displeasure which they brought upon themselves, by behaving in a manner so unworthy of them. 1 Cor. X. 1—13.

1 COR. X. 1.

MOREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be

1 CORINTHIANS X. 1.

I HAVE been urging you to run your Christian race with resolution and diligence; which you should the rather do, considering how fatally many of those miscarried who were once God's peculiar people, and favoured in a very extraordinary manner. *Now* this is so affecting a thought, that I must desire you, my *brethren,* to attend, while I farther illustrate it; for *I would by no means have you ignorant* [a] of so in-

SECT. XVIII. 1 Cor. X. 1.

[a] *Would by no means have you ignorant.*] Mr. Locke thinks, that when the Corinthians inquired about the lawfulness of eating things sacrificed unto idols, they

SECT. XVIII.

1 Cor. X 1

structive a history. You have, I doubt not, often heard, *that all our fathers*, whom Moses the great lawgiver of our nation led out of Egypt, *were* all *under the* conduct of that miraculous pillar of *cloud*, and of fire, which did their camp so singular an honour; *and* they *all passed through the sea*, the power of God opening a way for them, while the mountains inclosed them on either side, and their Egyptian enemies were pressing hard upon their rear. 2 *And* this was so wonderful and solemn an event, that I may say, they *were all baptized into Moses*, that is, initiated into the profession of that religion, which he was to teach them from God, *in the cloud, and in the sea*: God did, as it were, solemnly receive them under protection, as his people; and they, by following his miraculous guidance, declared their dependence upon him, 3 and entire subjection to him. *And* as they proceeded in their journey, *they did all eat the same spiritual food*, that is, the manna, which for its excellence is called angel's food. (Psal. lxxviii. 25,) and which was indeed an emblem of the bread of life that cometh down from 4 heaven. *And they did* also *all drink* of what might be called, on the like principles, *the same spiritual drink*, *for they drank of that spiritual* or mysterious *Rock*,[b] the wonderful streams of *which followed them*[c] through so many of their

ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea,

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat,

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink (For they drank of that spiritual Rock that follow-

might urge that they could not be mistaken for heathens because they maintained an open profession of Christianity, holding communion with the church, by partaking of the sacraments, as well as other acts of worship, and that they might be exposed to ill-will and ill-usage, if they did not sometimes comply with their neighbours And he supposes the apostle had each of these ideas in view, in what follows; it is possible he might.

[b] *The same spiritual meat—the same spiritual drink*.] It is not necessary to understand by the same meat and drink, the same by which we Christians are supported, for this could not properly be said of an Israelite who were not true believers, but the meaning is, that they all, good and bad, shared the same miraculous supply of food and drink

[c] *That followed them*.] It is objected, that "this stream did not constantly "follow them, for then they would have "had no temptation to have murmured "for want of water, as we know they did "at Kadesh, in the circumstances so fa-"tal to Moses, nor would they have had "any occasion to buy water of the Edo-"mites, as they proposed to do Deut. "ii. 6" Mr. Mede justly observes, that perhaps the streams from the first rock at Rephidim failed, for a farther trial of their faith, and at Kadesh God renewed the like wonder; but that likewise might probably fail when they came to the inhabited country of the Edomites, which was not till near the end of their wandering. Mede's Diatrib in loc. He there illustrates the similitude between Christ and this rock, in many other particulars; but those mentioned in the paraphrase seem the most material.—That the word *was*, imports here no more than *signified*, is extremely obvious, and instances of

SECT. XVIII

1 Cor X. 4.

ed them and that Rock was Christ)

wanderings and encampments; *and that Rock was* a most affecting representation of *Christ*, the Rock of ages, the sure foundation of his people's hopes, from whom they derive these streams of blessings, which follow them through all this wilderness of mortal life, and will end in rivers of pleasure at the right hand of God for ever.

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased for they were overthrown in the wilderness

It was the privilege of Israel as a people, to 5 enjoy such typical blessings as these, and *yet* it is plain, that *God had no pleasure in the greatest part of them, for they were overthrown in the wilderness* the whole generation that came adult out of Egypt was made to die there, and they sometimes died in such multitudes, that the ground was overspread with carcases, as a field is in which a battle has been fought

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted

Now these things were types and figures to 6 *us*, that we might learn wisdom at their expence, and not trust to external privileges, while we go on in a course of disobedience to the Divine authority, and particularly, *that we might not lust after evil things*, and indulge ourselves in irregular and luxurious desires, *as they also lusted* after quails in contempt of the manna, and thereby brought the wrath of God upon them, and were consumed with pestilential distempers, while the meat was yet between their teeth, (Psal lxxviii 30, 31) Learn therefore, by what they suffered, to cultivate that temperance and self-denial which I have just been recommending to you

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play

Neither be ye idolaters, 7 *as some of them* [*were*,] even while they yet continued at mount Sinai, *as* you know *it is written*, (Exod xxxii 6, 19,) with relation to the feast of the golden calf, *The people sat down to eat and drink* of the sacrifices which were offered to it, *and* then they *rose up to play*, and danced[d] in honour of this vain symbol of deity And

the like use of it every where abound in scripture

[d] *To play* and dance] Dr Whitby observes, that though many commentators understand this of fornication, it is without sufficient reason Fornication is indeed spoken of in another clause, and that the very next, verse 8, which makes it less probable that it is intended here. As the golden calf was designed as a symbol of Jehovah, there is no reason to imagine they would bring such an abomination into worship, however irregular, which was addressed to him And Elsner (Observ Vol II p 105) has abundantly vindicated the remark of Grotius

SECT. XVIII. 1 Cor. X. 8.

this naturally leads me to add another caution, no less suitable to your present circumstances than the former; *neither let us commit fornication*[e], or lewdness of any kind, *as some of them* in their idolatrous revels *committed* [*fornication*,] *and* particularly, when they eat the sacrifices of Baal Peor, and offended with the Midianitish women; the sad consequence of which was, that *there fell in one day twenty-three thousand* by the plague, besides those that were slain by the sword, who amounted to a thousand more.

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

9 (Num. xxv. 1—9.) *Neither let us tempt Christ* by our unbelief, after the tokens he hath given us to command our faith, and engage our dependence, *as some of* the next generation of *them also tempted* [*him*[f],] while he resided among them, as the angel of God's presence, *and were destroyed by* fiery *serpents*, (Numb. xxi. 6,) from the venom of which others were recovered by that brazen serpent which was so illustrious

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

10 a type of the Messiah. *Neither murmur ye* under dispensations of Providence, which may seem at present to bear hard upon you, and are contrary to your present inclinations and interest; *as some of them also murmured* again and again, *and were destroyed by the destroyer*[g], who was commissioned by one judgment and another to take them off.

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

11 *But* let me remind you on the whole, as I hinted above, that *all these* calamitous *things* which *happened unto them*, were intended *as* types or *ensamples* to us, that we might learn what we are to expect in the like case, *and they are*

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are

that παίζειν, signifies *to dance*, a ceremony with which God himself had lately been honoured, (Exod. xv. 20.) and which, it is very probable, might naturally be attended with the shouts and songs which Moses heard on approaching the camp. Exod. xxxii. 17, 18.

[e] *Commit fornication.*] This was common at many idolatrous feasts among the heathens; and it was the more proper for the apostle to caution these Christians against it, as it was proverbially called *the Corinthian practice*, κορινθιάζειν being, as many have observed, equivalent to *scortari*. Strabo tells us, that in one temple of Venus at Corinth, there were no less than a thousand *priestesses*, who made prostitution a part of their devotions to the *goddess*. Strabo. Lib. II. Cap. 16.

[f] *Tempt Christ as some of them tempted* [*him*.] Though the word *him* be not in the original, it seems plainly to be implied, and this is a considerable text in proof of his residence with the church in the wilderness, as the angel of God's presence. Compare Exod. xxiii. 20, Isa. lxiii. 9, Heb. xi. 26, Acts vii. 38.

[g] *The destroyer.*] The Jews generally interpret this of him whom they fancy to be the *angel of death*, and whom they call *Sammael*.

SECT. XVIII. 1 Cor. X. 11.

written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come[h]: as we live under the last dispensation which God will ever give to the children of men, and with which the whole œconomy of their probation shall wind up.

12 Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

12 *Therefore* let me urge this improvement of the whole survey upon you, and upon all into whose hand this epistle may come, and say, *let him that thinketh he standeth* most securely, and who may be ready most confidently to trust in his own strength, *take heed lest he fall* so much the lower, in proportion to the degree in which he imagines himself out of all manner of danger.

13 There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear

13 It is true indeed, and it is matter of great comfort and thankfulness to reflect upon it, that *no temptation has* yet *taken you, but such as is common to man*[i], and such as human reason properly exercised on the principles of that revelation which you enjoy, may furnish you with motives to resist. *And* we have the pleasure farther to reflect, that *God* [*is*] *faithful who* hath promised[k] to preserve his people, and he *will not leave you to be tempted above your ability: but will with the temptation* with which he permits you to be assaulted, *provide you also* with *a way of escape; that* if you be not wanting to yourselves, *you may be able to bear* [*it*:] yea, and may acquire new strength and honour by the combat.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 6-11

MAY Christians be always sensible how happy they are in having received such useful hints from the New Testament, to assist them in the interpretation of the Old; and particularly those which are here given. We see in Israel according to the flesh, an affecting emblem of the church in general. We see all their external privileges, though many and great, were ineffectual for their security, when they behaved as unworthy of them.

[h] *Ends of the world.*] Τελη αιωνων properly signifies the *concluding age*, or the *last dispensation* of God to mankind on earth; which, if we believe the gospel to be true, we must assuredly conclude that it is.

[i] *Common to man.*] Ανθρωπινος, may signify, also, *proportionable to human strength*, as well as frequent to human creatures; the paraphrase therefore imports that

[k] *Faithful who hath promised.*] Compare Psal. ciii. 13, 14, and numberless passages, in which God encourages his people to hope for his presence and help in pressing danger.

SECT. XVIII. Alas! how affecting is the thought, that some *who were under the* miraculous *cloud, who passed through the* waters of the divided *sea, who eat of the bread* that came down *from heaven, and drank of* that living *stream* which omnipotent mercy had opened *from the flinty rock*, and made it to follow them in the windings of their journey, should yet become, instead of being on the whole the objects of Divine favour and complacency, the monuments of wrath. Let us not ourselves therefore be *high-minded, but fear.* Let us mark the rocks on which they suffered this fatal shipwreck, if possible to keep clear of them; and pray that Divine grace may direct our course. Let us avoid not only those superstitious and idolatrous rites of worship, by which, as Protestants, we are in little danger of being ensnared; but also those lusts of the flesh, which must, considering our superior advantage, be highly displeasing to God; even though they should not rise to a degree of equal enormity and scandal.

Verse 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8

9 Let us especially take heed that we tempt not Christ, who has graciously been pleased to take us under his conduct, and to honour his church with so many demonstrative tokens of his presence. Nor let us murmur, if while we are in this wilderness state, we sometimes meet with difficulties in our way. Still let us make it familiar to our minds, that God adjusts the circumstances of every trial; even that God who stands engaged by the promises of his word, as well as the equity and goodness of his nature, *not to permit us to be tempted above what we are able to bear.* If we see not an immediate *way of escape*, let us calmly and attentively look around us, and humbly look up to him, *that he may pluck our feet out of the net.*

10, 13

SECT. XIX.

The Apostle farther pursues that caution against all approaches to idolatry, which he had been suggesting in the former section: particularly arguing from that communion which Christians had with Christ at his table, which ought to place them at the remotest distance from what might justly be called having communion with devils. 1 Cor. X. 14—22.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 14.

I HAVE just expressed my confidence in the care of God to support you under any extraordinary temptation which may hereafter arise, to draw you out of the way of your duty: *wherefore, my beloved* brethren, being assured of this, let me exhort you carefully, to *flee from* all approaches to *idolatry*, whatever circumstan

1 COR. X. 14. WHEREFORE my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

15 I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

ces of allurements, or danger, may seem to *speak* for some degrees of compliance. *I* now plead *as unto wise men:* I use a rational argument, which will bear the strictest examination, and which I am willing should be canvassed as accurately as you please; *judge you* therefore *what I say;* for I will refer it to your own deliberate and cooler thoughts, whether there be not danger in those idolatrous participations which some of you are so ready to defend; and whether they may not naturally bring some degree of guilt upon your conscience?

16 *The* sacramental *cup*, which is to us both the commemoration of past, and the pledge *of* future *blessing*, *which* in the name of the Lord *we* solemnly *bless*,[a] setting it apart to a holy and religious use; *is it not the* token of our faith and our *communion* in these inestimable privileges which are the purchase *of the blood of Christ*, shed for the remission of our sins? *The bread which we break*, and which was appointed in the first institution of the ordinance for this purpose, *is it not the communion of the body of Christ* in the like sense? That is, the token of our sharing in the privileges which he procured at the expence of sufferings, by which his body was broken, and almost torn in pieces. 17 *For we* Christians *being many*, *are* yet, as it were, but different parts of *one* and the same broken *bread*,[b] which we distribute, [*and*] receive in token of our being members of *one body; for we are all partakers of one* kind of holy *bread*, and one cup, which we eat, and drink together at the same table, in testimony of our mutual and in-

[a] *Which we bless.*] This text very plainly shews, that there is a sense in which we may be said to bless the sacramental elements. To render it, *the cup over which*, or *for which we bless God*, is doing great violence to the original. That is said to be *blessed* which is set apart to a sacred use, (Gen. ii. 3; Exod. xx. 11,) and on which the blessing *of* God is solemnly invoked.

[b] *Of one bread.*] Many valuable manuscripts read it, *and of one cup.* Elsner has an admirable note upon this text, to prove, that eating together in a religious manner hath been, in almost all ancient nations, a token of mutual friendship. See Mr. Lowman's Hebrew Ritual, p. 54, and Maimonides, quoted by him there. See more especially, Dr. Cudworth's Discourse concerning the True Notion of the Lord's Supper, chap. i. and chap. vi. And it is certain also, as it is intimated below, that by sacrifices, and the feasts on them, they held communion with the real or supposed deity, to which they were presented; as the author of a discourse on sacrifices has shewn at large: but that this was the only end of all sacrifices, I cannot think that learned writer sufficiently to have proved.

SECT. XIV. violable friendship, cemented in Christ our great and common head.

1 Cor. X. 18

Consider how it is with *Israel according to the flesh*, the lineal descendants of those who were the chosen and peculiar people of God: *are not they, who eat of the sacrifices* which have been offered in the court of their temple at Jerusalem, esteemed to be *partakers of the altar* of God, on which part of them have been consumed? And is not their eating the flesh of these victims esteemed as an act of communion with the Deity, to whom they were offered? Now you may easily perceive, that the same argument will be conclusive to prove, that they who share in the sacrifices presented to idols, knowing what they do, and especially doing it in some apartments belonging to the temples of such idols, hold a kind of communion with these fictitious and detestable deities, by no means reconcileable with the sanctity of their Christian character, or the tenor of their sacramental engagements.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar?

19 *What then do I say, that an idol* of wood or stone, of silver or gold, *is* in itself *any thing* divine? *Or* do I say, *that the thing which is sacrificed to idols* is in itself *any thing* morally and universally unclean? You well know, that I intend to maintain nothing of this kind.

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 *But* on the other hand, you must be aware, *that what the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to* evil *demons, and not to God*, such spirits, as those to which they address their devotions, must be sure to be wicked spirits, if they exist at all, and devils may well be supposed to use their utmost efforts to support such worship, it being grateful to them, in proportion to the degree in which it is affronting and injurious to the great object of Christian adoration, and ensnaring to the souls of men. *Now I would not* by any means, *that you* who have at your baptism solemnly renounced the devil, and all his adherents, *should* in any degree *have*, or seem to *have, communion with demons*.[c] And in-

20 But I *say* that the thing which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

21 21 Ye cannot

[c] *I would not that ye should have communion with demons.*] It is a monstrous notion of Olearius, that the heathens imagined the very sustenance and body of their deities insinuated itself into the victim offered to them, and so was united to

drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

deed this is most inconsistent with those solemn badges of your holy profession, by which your baptismal covenant is so frequently ratified and renewed. *Ye cannot*, with tolerable decency and consistency, at one time *drink of the cup of the Lord*, in that holy rite in which you commemorate his death, and at another time *of the cup of demons*, of libations poured out in their honour, or cups drank at their feasts. *Ye cannot* surely think, you should *be partakers of the table of the Lord, and* go from thence to *the table of demons*, or from theirs to his, to share alternately in such holy and such polluted rites and entertainments. Yet it is certain, that by partaking in their feasts, you do, as it were, contract a kind of friendship and familiarity with these infernal spirits.

SECT. XIX.

1 Cor. X. 21.

22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

22 *Do we*, by such a conduct as this, deliberately mean to *provoke the Lord to jealousy*,[d] by thus caressing those whom he abhors as his rivals? Must it not incense him exceedingly? and must it not, in its consequences, be detrimental, and even fatal to us? Or *are we stronger than he?* so as to be able to resist, or to endure the dreadful effects of his displeasure.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 22

LET us *hear and fear*: for it is the tendency of every wilful sin, *to provoke the Lord to jealousy*; it is a challenge to him, as it were, to let loose the fierceness of his wrath. And alas; how can such feeble creatures as we, endure its terrors! Let the consideration urged by the apostle, to deter men from *partaking in idolatrous sacrifices*, be weighed by us, as extending to every

the person eating the flesh of the sacrifices. Elsner, (Observ. Vol. II. p. 108,) has sufficiently confuted this his weak inference from some mistaken passages of Firmicus and Jamblicus. But this learned and judicious critic has proved at large, from incontestible authorities, that the demons were considered as present at these sacrifices, and as taking their part with the worshippers in the common feast; by which means, as Maimonides expresses it, in a very remarkable passage, (More Nevoch. Part III. cap. 46,) Friendship, Brotherhood, and familiarity, was contracted between them, because "all eat at one table, and sat down at "one board." The altar was called the *table of the Lord*, Mal. i. 12. Compare Deut. xxxii. 17. But then, as Dr. Cudworth hath shewn, we are not to conclude from hence, that under the gospel-dispensation, the *table* of the Lord is properly an *altar*; for the *Lord's supper* is not a *sacrifice*, but a *feast* upon a *sacrifice*. Cudworth on the True Notion of the Lord's Supper, chap. 5.

[d] *To jealousy*, &c.] Alluding to the notion of idolatry, as a kind of spiritual adultery, which moved the jealousy of God. Yet every deliberate sin is in effect daring his omnipotent vengeance.

SECT. XIX.

thing whereby God may be dishonoured, and Christ affronted.

They who are Christians indeed, and partake of that feast which the blessed Jesus hath instituted in commemoration of his dying love, do herein *partake of the body and the blood of Christ*: Let it be remembered as a pledge of everlasting obedience, since it is a memorial of infinite obligation: it shews that we belong to him, as his willing and peculiar people, that we renounce all his rivals, particularly Satan, and his kingdom, and whatever favours and supports his accursed cause. Let us be faithful to our allegiance, and have no more to do with any of these abominations.

Verse 21

17,&c. Let us also remember this as a pledge of everlasting *peace and love; we are all one bread, and one body*. Let us not envy and provoke, grieve and revile one another; but study mutual comfort and edification. And when little jealousies arise, and our secular interests seem to interfere, which may often be the case; let us open our minds to those exalted sentiments which our common relation to Christ tends to inspire; and let the sweet remembrance of the communion we have had with him, and each other, in that holy ordinance, blot out of our minds the memory of every difference which might tend to promote disgust and alienation.

SECT. XX.

The Apostle gives more particular directions as to the cases and circumstances in which things sacrificed to idols might, or might not, lawfully be eaten; and urges farther considerations, to engage them willingly to resign their own gratifications in some instances, for the glory of God, and the good of their brethren. 1 Cor. X. 23, *to the end.* Chap. XI. 1.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 23.

1 COR. X. 23. ALL things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

SECT. XX.

1 Cor. X. 23.

I HAVE said a great deal, to guard you against all approaches to idolatry. In answer to this, I know, it may be replied, that there are certain things which may accidentally lead to it, and yet, being in their own nature indifferent, may be so used as to decline the danger. Granting it then, that *all* these *things are lawful for me*, I am persuaded, *nevertheless*, you will readily acknowledge, that *all* such *things are not* in every circumstance *expedient*. Granting, I say, that *all* these *things*, about which we have been discoursing, *are lawful for me*, *yet* it is undeniably apparent, that *all things edify not*; and

1 Cor. X. 23.

I ought certainly to consider what may most effectually conduce to the edification of my neighbour, and of the church in general, as well as what may suit my own particular inclination, or convenience: for I may find good reasons for declining many things, as ensnaring to others, which, were I to regard myself alone, might be perfectly indifferent. *Let no one therefore seek* the gratification of *his own* humour, or the advancement of what may seem his personal interest, *but* let *every one* pursue *another's* [*welfare*,] endeavouring to enrich all that are around him in holiness and comfort. 24

24 Let no man seek his own: but every man another's wealth.

Believe me, my brethren, I am desirous not to lay you under any unnecessary restraints. And therefore, *whatever* [*flesh*] *is sold in the shambles*,[a] *that* I allow you to *eat*, *asking no questions for conscience sake*, that is, not scrupulously inquiring, whether it have, or have not, made a part of any idol-sacrifice. *For* as the Psalmist expresses it, (Psal. xxiv. 1.) *the whole earth* [*is*] *the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.* All these things therefore are to be taken as they come to our hands, and used with cheerfulness and thanksgiving, as the common bounties of his providence to his human creatures. *And* farther *if any of the unbelievers*, who live in your neighbourhood, *invite you*[b] to his house, *and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you*, at the entertainment; *not asking any question for conscience sake*, but receiving it, whatever it be, as that supply which Divine Providence has then been pleased to send you. *But if any one say to you, This* food is part of what *hath been sacrificed to an idol, eat it not, but* [*with*]*out of regard to him that shewed thee* this circumstance; whether he be an hea- 25 26 27 28

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not, bid you *to a feast*, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that

[a] *Sold in the shambles.*] Herodotus observes, that the Egyptians, when they had cut off the heads of their victims, used to carry the carcase to the market, and sell it to the Greeks, if they could find any to purchase it; if not, they threw it into the river, judging it unlawful to eat it themselves. (Raphel. ex Herod. in loc.) And though the Grecian priests had no such scruples, yet as they had often more flesh of their sacrifices than they and their families could consume, it was natural for them to take this method of disposing of it to advantage; and at times of extraordinary sacrifice, it is probable the neighbouring markets might be chiefly supplied from their temples.

[b] *Invite you.*] That καλειν often signifies *to invite*, Raphelius (Annot. ex Xen.) has shewn at large; but to conclude that it must generally be so rendered, is very unwarrantable.

SECT. XX. 1 Cor. x. 28.

then, who may hereby be confirmed in his idolatry, or a brother, who may otherwise be ensnared by thine example, and tempted to violate the dictates of his own mind; *and*, I may say, *out of regard to conscience* too; for thou canst not injure thy brother in this respect, without subjecting thyself to some remorse on a serious reflection. And the scripture I mentioned before, may suggest a pertinent consideration here: *for* as *the earth* [*is*] *the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*,[c] thou mayest reasonably hope he will provide for thee some other way, and mayest be assured, that he cannot want the means of doing it. *I say*, [*for the sake of*] *conscience*, but I mean, *not thine own* immediately, *but that of another* person; for how indifferent soever thou mayest esteem the matter, thou art obliged in duty to be very cautious that thou dost not wound and grieve that of thy brother: (but you will observe that I here speak only of acts obvious to human observation; *for* as to what immediately lies between God and my own soul, *why is my liberty* to be *judged*, arraigned and condemned, *at* [*the bar of*] *another man's conscience?*[d] I am not, in such cases, to govern myself by the judgment and apprehension of others, nor have they any authority to judge, or censure me, for not concurring with them in their own narrow notions and declarations. *For if I by* the Divine *grace* and favour, *am made a partaker* of the common gifts of Providence, *why am I reviled for* my free and cheerful use of *that for which I give* God my humble *thanks*, as tracing it up to the hand of the great supreme Benefactor?)

> shewed it, and for conscience sake. For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

29

> 29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the others: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30

> 30 For, if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

31 *Therefore*, on the whole, to conclude this discourse; since no one particular rule can be laid down, to suit all the diversities of temper and apprehension which may arise, instead of un-

> 31 Whether ther-

[c] *The earth*, &c.] Some good copies omit these words, yet they have so evident a propriety and beauty here, in contrast with verse 26, that I was by no means disposed to follow them.

[d] *Why is my liberty*, &c.] Some think the meaning is, "Why should I use my liberty, so as to offend the conscience of any?" Others think, it is an objection in the mouths of [illegible] Corinthians, and to be thus understood, "but why should I suffer myself to be thus imposed upon, and receive [illegible] any, where Christ has left [illegible]?" I rather think, that this and [illegible] verse, come in as a kind of [illegible], to prevent their extending the [illegible] caution beyond what he designed by it.

fore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

SECT. XX.

1 Cor. X. 31.

charitable contentions with each other, or any thing that looks like mutual contempt, let us take all the pains we can to meet as in the centre of real religion; see to it then, that *whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever* else *you do*, in the common, as well as sacred, actions of life, ye *do all to the glory of God*, pursuing the credit of the gospel, and the edification of the church; that he may be honoured in the happiness of his creatures, and more universally acknowledged as the author of all good.

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

32 In this respect, and in every other, see to it, that ye *be inoffensive both to the Jews*, who you know, abhor every thing that looks like the least approach to idol-worship; *and to the Greeks* *, and other unconverted Gentiles, who are so much attached to it, that they are willing to catch at all pretences of justifying themselves in the practice: *and to the church of God*, whether consisting of circumcised, or uncircumcised converts to Christianity, who would grieve to see the common edification obstructed, in instances wherein they themselves might not be endangered.

33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

33 Endeavour to follow, in this respect, my example; acting *as I* also do, who study *in all things* to *please all men*, so far as I apprehend it for their real advantage; *not seeking mine own interest* or gratification, *but that of many, that they may be saved* by being brought to, and confirmed in, that religion on which their eternal happiness depends.

I CORINTHIANS XI. 1. Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.

1 Cor XI. 1.

In this grand and important consideration I lose every inferior view, as our great Lord and Master did; *be ye* therefore herein *imitators of me, as I also [am] of Christ:* and you will be in the way to please him, and to secure infinitely greater advantage from his favour, than you can ever be called to resign for the good of your brethren.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT exalted and generous sentiments are these! Well do they become every minister, yea every disciple of Christ! What

* *Jews and Greeks.*] As these are both opposed to the church of God, I conclude he speaks of *unconverted Jews*, or *Greeks*; and refers to the danger there might be of prejudicing them against Christianity, by the indulgences against which he cautions them.

SECT. XX. a glorious society would his church soon be, if each of its members was actuated by them! *not seeking his own things but those of others;* not pursuing his own interest, but that of many, *that they may be saved!* Yea, how happy would each particular person be, in such a wise and tender care of the whole, beyond what the most eager and successful pursuit of a separate interest can render him!

Verse 23, 24-29

Let us endeavour to steer in the due medium, between the opposite extremes of an excessive scrupulosity, and a presumptuous rashness; and attend to the various distinguishing circumstances which will demand a correspondent difference of conduct, in things which may seem to an inattentive eye much the same: not thinking that attention and caution needless, by which *the glory of our God*, and the *edification of our brethren*, may be promoted. We may expose ourselves in consequence of this tenderness of conscience, to inconveniencies, straits, and contempt; but let us commit all our concerns to that Divine Providence which extends itself to all its works; and rejoice to think, that *the earth is the Lord's, and all its fulness:* out of which he will not fail to furnish necessary supplies to those who fear him, and are thus solicitous to preserve a conscience void of offence before him. But while we are strictly cautious ourselves, let us not be rash and severe in our censures of others, who stand, or fall, to their own master, and who may in some instances have reasons, to us unknown, for a conduct most different from ours

25-27, 31, 26-28

O! that Divine grace may teach us all to govern our whole lives by this extensive important maxim: *that whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, we pursue the glory of God!* Let us dignify and sanctify all the common actions of life, by performing them from these high and holy motives; and so turning them into sacrifices of devotion and love. Then shall we not only avoid giving offence to others, but shall conduct ourselves in such a manner, as shall make us *burning and shining lights* in the world, and extend our sphere of usefulness far beyond that of our personal converse, and perhaps beyond the date of our precarious abode in this transitory world.

31, 32

Thus *glorifying* our *heavenly Father on earth, and finishing the work he hath given us to do,* we may hope through his grace in Christ, to be glorified with him above, and to be brought to a brighter image of that Saviour, who has set us so perfect an example of the temper and conduct here recommended, which even the blessed apostle Paul followed only with unequal steps.

Chap. XI. 1.

SECT. XXI.

The Apostle sets himself to reform some indecencies which had crept into the church of Corinth; and particularly that of women prophesying with their head uncovered. 1 Cor. XI. 2—16.

1 COR. XI. 2.
NOW I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you.

3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ, *is* God.

4 Every man praying, or prophesying,

1 CORINTHIANS XI. 2.

SECT. XXI. 1 Cor. XI. 2

I HAVE just *now* exhorted you, *my brethren*, to imitate me, as I endeavour to copy the example of our blessed Lord. And while I am giving you such an exhortation, I ought to express my satisfaction in seeing many of you so ready to comply with it. *I praise* such of *you* therefore, *that in all things you are mindful of me, and* strenuously *retain the charges* I gave, *as I committed* [*them*] *to you.* 3 *But* as to your inquiring concerning the manner in which women should deliver any thing in public, when they are by a Divine impulse called to do it; *I would have you to know*, in order to regulate your judgment and conduct aright, *that Christ is the head of every man;* so that every Christian should often recollect the relation in which he hath the honour to stand to him, as an engagement to observe the strictest decorum in his whole behaviour. *And* if the different sexes be compared, *the head of the woman is the man;* to whom therefore she ought to pay a reverent respect, as in the Lord. *And the head of Christ* [*is*] *God:* Christ in his mediatorial character, acts in subordination to the Father, who rules by him, and hath constituted him Sovereign of all worlds, visible and invisible. And as the Father's glory is interested in the administration of Christ, so is the glory of Christ in some measure interested in the conduct and behaviour of those men whose more immediate head he is: and I may add, of these women whose heads such men are.

4 Now, upon this principle, I may say, in reference to the usages which prevail at this time in your country; *every man, praying or prophesying*, in a public assembly, whether he give forth inspired psalms or hymns, or utter predictions, or common instruction; if he do it *with*

SECT. XXI.

1 Cor. XI. 5.

[*his*] *head covered*, acting therein contrary to the received rules of decency among us, he in a degree *dishonours* Christ *his head*,[a] as behaving unworthy his relation to him. *And* on the other hand, *every woman, praying or prophesying*, under such inspiration as above, *with* [*her*] *head unveiled, dishonoureth* man, who is *her head*, by behaving in such a manner as is indecent in an assembly consisting of so many men as are usually present on these occasions: *for* I may say, that *it is* in this respect *the same as if*[b] *she were shaved*: shaving her head is only taking off the natural covering, and exposing it bare; which is so shameful a thing, that you know it has often been inflicted as a proper kind of punishment, on women of the most abandoned character; and it is scandalous, that any thing like this should be used in your Christian assemblies; and this too, by persons pretending to extraordinary characters and assistances. I may *there-* 6 *fore* say, *if a woman will not be veiled, let her even be shorn; but if it be* apparently *shameful for a woman to have her hair shorn, or shaved off*, *let her* keep as far as possible from so disagreeable an appearance; and *have* her head covered with *a* proper *veil*, at the times, and in the circumstances of which we now speak.

7 *For a man indeed ought not to have* [*his*] *head covered*, as *being the* immediate *image and glory of God*: and made in his likeness as the first copy of its kind, before woman was created. It is decent therefore, that he should appear with the marks of that superiority which he indeed bears; *but the woman* should forbear it; and it is enough to say of her, that she *is the glory of the man*: to whom God hath done no inconsiderable honour, as well as favour, in making

having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

5 But every woman that prayeth, or prophesieth, with *her* head uncovered, dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

[a] *Every man praying, &c. with his head covered, dishonoureth* [*his*] *head.*] It was certainly (as Dr. Whitby, and others, have proved,) the custom among the Greeks and Romans, as well as the Jews, to appear in worshipping assemblies with their head covered: and it is certain the Jewish priests wore a kind of turban, when ministering in the temple. But it seems, that the Corinthian men wore a veil, out of regard to Pharisaical traditions, and in imitation of the custom prevailing in the synagogues; which therefore the apostle disapproved. The women seem to have their hair dishevelled, when praying by Divine inspiration; (which seems to have been the only case in which they could regularly pray in public,) this made them resemble those pagan priestesses, who pretend to be actuated by their gods, the apostle therefore with great propriety discourages it

SECT. XXI.

1 Cor. XI. 7.

so excellent and amiable a creature for his benefit and comfort. Yet still her state of subjection to him should be remembered, and it is very expedient she should appear in public with some tacit acknowledgment of it.

8 For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man.

8 *For the man is not*, in the first production of his nature, taken out *of the woman; but* as we read in the sacred history, (Gen. ii. 21—23.) *the woman out of the man.*

9 Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

9 *Neither* [*was*] *the man created for the* sake of the *woman* to accommodate and assist her; *but the woman for* the sake of *the man*, that he might have a help meet for him, which before he found not in the whole creation. (Gen. ii. 20.)

10 For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head, because of the angels.

10 *On this account* therefore, as well as for the other reasons I have mentioned above, *the woman ought to have upon* [*her*] *head* a veil, as a token of her being under the *power* [b] and subjection of the man: and so much the rather should she wear it in worshipping assemblies, *because of the angels* who are especially present there, and before whom we ought to be exceedingly careful that nothing pass which may be indecent and irregular, and unlike that perfect order and profound humility with which they worship in the Divine presence.

[b] *Power on* [*her*] *head.*] Mr. Locke acknowledges with a modesty which does him much honour, that he did not understand this text; and many seem to have darkened it, by their attempts to explain it. But the chief difficulty does not lie in the word *power*; which must, to be sure, be understood of a veil, which married women wore on their head, as a token of subjection to their husband; (see Gen. xxiv. 65.) and Mr. Godwin, (Moses and Aaron, p 236.) supposes the *veil* was in Hebrew called רדיד, (*Radid,*) from a *root*, רדד, (*Radad,*) which signified *subjection*; so that the *veil* was, as it were, the *habit* by which a woman shewed she considered herself in *subjection* and Chardin observes, that the married women in Persia wear a peculiar habit to the very same purpose. Chard Pers. Vol II. p. 187. It is much more difficult to ascertain the meaning of that clause, *because of the angels*. It seems neither reasonable, nor decent, to explain this of young ministers, as if they were in peculiar danger of being ensnared by the beauty of women; and it is more grossly absurd still to suppose with Tertullian, (de Vel Virg. § 7.) that there was any room to apprehend it could be a snare to celestial spirits; (which mistake seemed to be grounded on the wild interpretation of Gen. vi. 2, so generally received among the fathers. Dr. Whitby understands it of evil angels, and thinks it refers to the punishment which Eve incurred, (Gen. iii. 16.) for hearkening to the suggestions of Satan. A late ingenious writer by *αγγελων*, understands *spies*, who he supposes came into Christian assemblies to make ill-natured remarks, and so would be glad to blaze abroad any indecencies they might observe there. (See Mr. Gough's Diss. in loc.) I have not room to canvass all these; but only add in support of the sense, which, as least exceptionable, I have followed, that the presence of *angels* in religious assemblies is favoured by Eccles. v. 1, 6, and the figures of *Cherubim* in the tabernacle and temple.

SECT. XXI.

1 Cor. XI. 11.

I have treated the matter with a plainness and freedom becoming my character; *nevertheless*, let not any hints which I have dropped of the superior dignity of the man be abused, to render him haughty and tyrannical: for it is evident, that *the man* [*is*] *not without the woman, nor the woman without the man, in the Lord.* You know that the existence and comfort of either sex has a dependence upon the other; which the genius of the Christian religion requires us to consider, and to behave in a man-

12 ner corresponding to it. *For as the woman* [*was*] at first taken *from* the rib of *the man*, whom he ought therefore to love as part of himself, and she to revere him, as under God the source of her being; *so also*, in the ordinary course of the Divine production, *the man* [*is*] *by the woman*, born, nourished, and in the tenderest years of life educated by her; a circumstance that ought to be ever most tenderly remembered, as a spring of grateful affection and regard. *But* let me add, that whether in the first creation, or the successive production of human creatures, *all things* [*are*] *of God*; whose constitution ought therefore humbly and obediently to be revered, and all the duties of relative life performed, as for his sake, and to his glory.

13 But with respect to the particular circumstance I was speaking of, I may leave you to *judge of yourselves whether it be*, according to the usages generally prevailing among us, *decent*[c] *for a woman to pray to God* with that masculine and confident air which she must have

14 when her head is *uncovered:* Or rather, *doth not* the sight immediately shock us, previous to any reasonings upon it in our own mind? So that *nature itself* seems to *teach you, that* on the one hand *for a man to have long hair* solicitously adjusted and artfully adorned, *is* such a mark of an effeminate character, as is,

15 on the whole, *a disgrace to him*; *Whereas*, on the other hand, *if a woman hath long hair* spread over her shoulders, *it is* rather *a glory*

11 Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord.

12 For as the woman *is* of the man, even so *is* the man also by the woman, but all things of God.

13 Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

14 Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?

15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her, for

[c] *Judge whether it be decent*, &c.] The Grecian women, excepting the heathen priestesses, used to appear in their veils, when they came into public assemblies; as we find in Homer, and many other ancient writers.

SECT. XXI.

I. Cor. XI. 16.

her hair is given her for a covering.

to her; for her hair was given her instead of a veil, in the first constitution of her nature, and before the arts of dress were invented or needed.

16 But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

Thus the matter appears to me, when I reflect upon the original, and the present state of things, and what seems from that to be the voice of nature. *But if any one appears to be contentious*, and will dispute this, upon his own different views of what is naturally decent, I shall not controvert it farther, but content myself with saying, that *we have* here *no such custom*, for women to appear with their head uncovered; *neither* do I know of its prevailing in any of *the* other *churches of God*,[d] whether planted by me, or any of my brethren. I think therefore that it ought to be avoided, as a singularity which may appear like affectation, and give offence, even if it be not judged a natural indecorum. And thus I leave the affair to your consideration; and promise myself, you will give me no farther cause of complaint on this head.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 3, 4

LET Christians frequently remember the honourable relation in which they stand to Christ as their Head; and as beyond all dispute, he is, under his mediatorial character, most willingly and joyfully subject to God, let us learn to imitate him in that cheerful and entire subjection, out of love and reverence to him, guarding against whatever is unbecoming, lest he be dishonoured thereby.

14, 16

By the passage before us, we see the force of custom, for determining, in many respects, what is decent, and what is otherwise. Let us maintain a proper regard to this: lest even our good should be, through our imprudence, evil-spoken of, and all our infirmities magnified into crimes. Let us often recollect the original dignity of our nature, by which we are *the image and glory of God*: that, so far as by sin and folly this honour is lost, we may endeavour to regain it; and where it is not, may think and act more suitably to so high a relation.

10

When in any act of Divine worship, we have the honour to

[d] *Nor any of the* other *churches.*] Mons. Amyraut understands it in this sense, "The churches do not use to contend "with me, but to submit to my deci-"sion;" but the former clause, *we have no such custom*, will not admit this. The argument on the other interpretation is clear and strong.

SECT. XXI.

approach the blessed God, let us reverence his awful presence, and even that of his holy angels, who attend the assemblies of the saints. We pray, *the will of God may be done upon earth, as it is done in heaven:* let us be careful to worship God in such a manner, that these celestial spirits, who ever appear before him with sacred awe, may not be offended at the rudeness and folly of sinful mortals; whom they may well wonder to see admitted in their best estate, to this Divine privilege which they have forfeited by repeated provocations.

Verse 11, 12

As for what St. Paul observes of the mutual dependence which the sexes have on each other, let it dispose them to mutual candour and respect; avoiding the cruel tyranny, or the vain affectation, which often arms them, on either side, with ungenerous reflections. And as *all things are of God*, let it be our concern, that all things be *to him;* that all things be faithfully employed for his glory; and whatever comforts we receive in relative life, which are indeed many and important, let us adore the wisdom of the Divine constitution in the original formation of our nature, and the secret influence and conduct of his providence, in the regulation of our respective circumstances and affairs.

SECT. XXII.

The Apostle, in order to reform several scandalous abuses of the Lord's supper, which had crept into the church of Corinth, leads back their views to the original institution of the solemn ordinance, and infers from thence the danger of profaning it 1 Cor. XI. 17, *to the end.*

I. CORINTHIANS XI. 17.

SECT. XXII.

1 Cor. XI. 17.

THUS you have my free sentiments of the manner in which women, even when most singularly honoured by God, should appear in your religious assemblies. *But while I am giving* [*you*] *these instructions, I do not*, and cannot, *praise* [*you*,] as I would, on several accounts; and particularly on this, *that* when *you come together* in these assemblies, and on the most solemn occasions, there are such irregularities, and sometimes such indecencies among you, that your meeting is *not for the better, but for the worse*, as you lose more in religion one way than you gain another. 18 *For*, before I mention any other instance of this, I must observe, in the *first* place, that *when ye come together in*

1 COR. XI. 17. NOW in this that I declare *unto you*, I praise *you* not, that you come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye come toge-

1 Cor. XI. 18.

ther in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it.

the church[a] though it is so evident, that nothing but reverence to God, and love to each other, should reign on such occasions; *I hear that there are schisms*, or uncharitable and angry divisions and disputes *among you, and I* do, *in some respect*, and with regard to some of you, *believe it:*

19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved, may be made manifest among you.

19 *For* in the course of things, it is to be expected, that *there must be even heresies among you*[b]: contentions will arise to such a height, that separations will ensue. The warmth of some tempers evidently leads to this; and Providence may probably permit it, *that they who are* of the most *approved* characters, *may be made manifest among you*, by the steadiness and candour of their conduct.

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

20 It is particularly grievous to me, to be forced to complain of your irregular behaviour, while celebrating that most excellent and endearing ordinance of the eucharist: but I am compelled to do it; and *therefore* I tell you plainly, that *when you come together* in such a manner, as you do, *into one place*, under pretence of attending this grand solemnity, *it is not eating the Lord's supper*[c]: it does not deserve to be called by

[a] *Come together in the church.*] Some have urged this as an instance in which *church* signifies a *building* for public worship; and have urged also the 22d verse in the same view; but both may be interpreted of the assembly, as the paraphrase shews,

[b] *There must be even heresies.*] It seems evident from hence, that heresy is spoken of as something worse than the schism mentioned above; but whether it be an evil entirely of a different kind, or only of a higher degree, is not so clear from this passage. I think, for reasons not here to be enumerated, that the word *αἵρεσις* signifies *a sect of people separated from others*, and forming what we call a distinct denomination; whereas there may be schism without separation, if people assembling together have uncharitable contentions with each other; which was the case of these schismatical Corinthians.

[c] *It is not eating the Lord's supper.*] The Corinthians seem to have been guilty of two great faults in the matter here referred to, which St. Paul, in the following discourse, labours to reform;—The *one*, that they confounded the *Lord's supper* with the common meals they made together; (from whence the *love-feasts* were afterwards derived;) thinking it sufficient, (as the Quakers now do,) if they mingled some thoughts of Christ' death, with this common use of bread and wine;—The *other*, that they used such a rapacious behaviour at these *feasts*, and treated one another so rudely and unkindly, as on their own principles would have been very indecent. This latter circumstance is finely illustrated in a passage from Xenophon, (Memor. lib. 3. cap. xiv. § 1.) in which he observes, that Socrates was much offended with the Athenians for their conduct at their common suppers, as some prepared delicately for themselves, while others were but slenderly provided for. That worthy man endeavoured to shame them out of this low taste, by offering his provisions to all the company. Mr. Grove hath with great propriety mentioned a passage from Socrates the ecclesiastical historian, (lib. v. cap. 22,) in which he speaks of some Egyptians living near Alexandria, who partook of the *sacrament* in a very peculiar manner, (as it seems much after the Corinthian fashion,) introducing it with a jovial feast,

SECT. XXII.

1 Cor. XI. 21.

that name. Instead of regarding it in a holy and religious view, you confound it with a common meal; and do not indeed behave in the manner that decency would require if it were no more than a common meal: *for* though you sit down at what, even in that case, ought to be a social and friendly table, yet each has his particular mess, and without offering a share of it, in an obliging manner to the rest, *every one in eating*, greedily *taketh before* [*the other*] *his own supper* [d], both the food and liquor which he hath provided; *and so* while *one* poor brother, for want of suitable provisions, *is hungry, another* eats and *drinks to excess*[e]; which would in all circumstances be a scandal to a Christian, and especially to a religious assembly, as this certainly ought to be.

21 For in eating, every one taketh before *other* his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

22 *What* a reproach is this to your common profession! Give me leave to ask you, *have you not houses to eat and to drink in* on common occasions, that you must come to the place of public worship, thus to entertain yourselves there, which is certainly in all views very ill-judged? *Or do you despise the church of God*, which you must greatly offend by such a conduct as this; *and* at the same time *shame those that have not* provisions and accommodations of their own, and might hope at your common meals to be relieved? *What shall I say to you* on this occasion? *Shall I praise you in this* [*respect?*] I wish I could fairly and honourably do it; but at present, *I praise* [*you*] *not;* I must rather blame you, and exhort you to amend what is so grossly amiss.

22 What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? what shall I say, to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not.

23 And that my admonitions and exhortations may come with the greater weight, let me lead back your thoughts to the original institution of this profaned and affronted ordinance; which if

23 For I have re-

in which they regaled themselves with all kinds of food. See Grove on the sacrament, p. 108.

[d] *His own supper.*] This monstrous, and to us unaccountable circumstance, is cleared up by what is said above of the *social suppers* used among the Greeks: to which each brought his own provisions, which were not always made so common to the whole company as decency and friendship might have required.

[e] *Drinks to excess.*] The word μεθυει, has this signification in a great latitude; but one would hope, that though the Jews and heathens were often intoxicated in their religious festivals, these Christians, imprudent and irregular as they were, did not carry their excesses so far; and therefore I chose to soften the version. Compare Vol. I. p. 139, note k.

SECT. XXII.

1 Cor. XI. 23.

ceived of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread:

you reflect upon, I am sure you must be heartily grieved at the indignities you have offered it, and will be engaged to resolve you will never repeat them. Now I am able to speak of this matter with great certainty and exactness: *for* my knowledge of it did not depend upon any human tradition whatsoever; but *I received* by special revelation *from the Lord*[f] Jesus Christ himself *that which I also delivered to you*, in my former preaching on this subject, in which, as in all things else I have been careful most exactly to adhere to my original instructions. And you know the substance of it was this, *That the Lord Jesus Christ, the* very [*same*] *night in which he was betrayed*, and amidst all those serious thoughts which his own nearly approaching sufferings must suggest, after he had finished the paschal supper, *took bread*, some of the remainder of those unleavened cakes with which that solemn feast is celebrated; *And having*, in a most reverent manner, *given thanks* to God, the great Author of all temporal and spiritual blessings, and looked up to him for his blessing upon it, for the purposes to which it was going to be appropriated, *he brake* [*it*] into several pieces, *and* distributing it to his disciples who were present, *said, Take* this bread, and *eat* it with due reverence and regard; for *this is* the solemn representation of *my body which is* just going to be *broken*, by the most bitter pains and agonies, *for you* and your salvation; *this* therefore *do in* all the succeeding ages of my church, as a *commemoration of me*[g]; that the memory

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

24

[f] *I received* by special revelation, &c.] This epistle seems to have been written before any of the Gospels; and it seems to be intimated, Gal. i. 17, &c. that when he wrote it, he had seen none of the apostles. It is very remarkable, that the institution of this ordinance should make a part of that immediate revelation with which Christ honoured him; and it affords a strong argument for the perpetuity of it in the church. For had others of the apostles, (as Barclay presumes to insinuate,) mistaken what passed at the last passover, and founded the observation of the eucharist on that mistake, surely Christ would rather have corrected this error in his new revelation to St. Paul, than have administered such an occasion of confirming Christians in it. For some notes which might have been inserted here, see Vol. II sect. 172.

[g] *This do*, &c.] Because the word ποιειν signifies in some few instances, *to sacrifice*, Dr. Bret would render it, *sacrifice this*: whence he infers, that the *eucharist is a sacrifice*. And a learned prelate in the council of Trent, pleaded, much with the like judgment, that when Christ uttered these words before the cup, he ordained them priests; whereas he gave them the bread as laicks. See Father Paul's Hist. of the Council of Trent, p. 519.

SECT. XXII.

of my painful death may be kept up in the world, and your hearts and those of all my faithful followers, be properly affected with the review of it. (1 Cor. XI. 25.) *In like manner also [he took] the cup:* which, you well remember, was *after he had supped;* so that it was by no means a part of that meal they had been making, but something quite distinct from it: and he likewise distributed that to them as he had done the bread; *saying, This cup is the* solemn seal and memorial of the *new covenant,* which is established *in my blood,* by which all its invaluable blessings are derived to you. *This* likewise *do, as often as ye drink [it] in commemoration of me,* and in order to maintain the memory of my bleeding dying love in the church and the world. 26 *You therefore*[h], *as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup*[i], *do* indeed perform a very solemn and important action; for, according to his own interpretation and institution, you *shew forth,* and as it were proclaim, *the Lord's death* in its most affecting circumstances; which the church must throughout all ages continue to do, *until he come*[k], to close the present scene of things, and to receive all his faithful servants to a place, where, for ever dwelling with him, they will no more need 27 these memorials of an absent Saviour. *So that* you see, by a farther consequence, *whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink*[l] *[this] cup of the*

25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death, till he come.

27 Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord un-

[h] *Therefore as often as ye eat.*] It is plain that γαρ, must here have the force of an illative particle; as it also has Luke xx. 38.

[i] *Eat this bread,* &c.] It is no wonder, a text in which this element is so plainly called *bread* after *consecration,* should be urged against the Popish doctrine of *transubstantiation.* And it signifies little for them to plead, that the scripture sometimes calls things changed, by the name of the thing out of which they were made, (as *Adam* is called *dust,* Gen iii. 19; *Aaron's* serpent, a *rod,* Exod. vii. 12;) or calls them according to their sensible appearance, (Josh. v 13; Mark xvi. 5;) for these instances rather turn against them; by proving, that where the literal interpretation is evidently absurd, we must have recourse to the figurative.

[k] *Until he come.*] Nothing can be more unreasonable, than to refer this, (as the Quakers do,) to the time when Christ should come, by his *spiritual illumination* on their minds, to take them off from carnal ordinances; for, not to insist upon it, that we have at least as much need of the *Lord's supper* as the primitive Christians had, (not having so many advantages as they, to keep up the memory of Christ in our minds, to quicken us to holiness and to unite us in love,) it is evident the grand coming of Christ by the Spirit, was when it was poured out on the day of pentecost; an event, which had happened many years before the date of this epistle.

[l] *Eat, or drink.*] So it is in the original, η πινη; nor could our translators surely be under any temptation to render it, *eat and drink,* to elude the argument drawn from hence for *communion* is one kind only; since, as that excellent French preacher, Mons. Superville observes, (Serm. Vol

worthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Lord unworthily, that is, in an irreverent manner, without a due regard to him, and to the great original purpose of its appointment, *shall be* counted *guilty of* profaning, and affronting in some measure, that which is intended to represent *the body and blood of the Lord;* and consequently the affront does evidently rebound to our Lord himself, who was pleased with infinite condescension, for our sakes, to assume human flesh, and to suffer in it.

SECT. XXII.

1 Cor. XI. 27.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

28 Let none *therefore* come to the ordinance in a rash and irreverent manner; but *let a man examine himself* as to his knowledge of its intent, and his desire to comply with its great design; *and so let him eat of the* sacramental *bread, and drink of the cup* which is used with it.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

29 *For he that eateth and drinketh in an* irreverent, profane, and *unworthy manner*,[m] must certainly displease and provoke God; so that it may truly be said, that he *eateth and drinketh judgment to himself*:[n] he takes the readiest way to bring down the judgments of God upon him, *not distinguishing the Lord's body*, nor making that proper difference which he ought to make between that and common food.

30 For this cause many *are* weak and

30 And accordingly many of you have actually brought such judgments upon yourselves; and I must plainly tell you, it is *upon this account*, and to manifest the Divine displeasure against you for such shameful irregularities, that God hath sent distempers among you, so that *many of you* [*are*]

IV. p. 245,) it might as well prove, that the *cup* may be received without the *bread*, as the *bread* without the *cup*. So that it is surprising assurance in a late Popish writer, to plead from hence, that communion in one kind only was the practice of the Corinthian church. See Mod. Controv. p. 100.

[m] *In an unworthy manner.*] To receive to purposes of faction, or intemperance, was receiving very unworthily; but the sense of that phrase must extend to *every* manner of receiving contrary to the nature and design of the ordinance; and consequently, to the case of doing it merely in a *secular* view; which I heartily pray that all concerned in it may seriously consider.

[n] *Judgment to himself.*] I think it the most unhappy mistake in all our version of the Bible, that the word κριμα, is here rendered *damnation*. It has raised a dread in tender minds, which has greatly obstructed the comfort and edification they might have received from this ordinance. The apostle afterwards says, *we are judged*, (that is, as he afterwards explains it, *we are corrected*) *that we may not be condemned;* which plainly shews, the judgment spoken of might be fatherly chastisements. This sin, as sin, does indeed expose us to condemnation, should God be extreme to mark it, as an irreverent behaviour under *any other* ordinance does; but it is *superstition* to set this at so vast a distance from all the rest, as many do

SECT. XXII.

1 Cor. XI. 30.

now *weak and sick, and some* considerable numbers of your society *are fallen asleep* in death. Survivors therefore ought to lay the matter seriously to heart, and set about an immediate re-31 formation. *For if we would judge ourselves*[o] with a due severity and impartiality, *we should not* surely *be* so severely *judged*, and animad-32 verted upon by God. *But when we are* thus *judged*, it is not in a displeasure wholly inexorable, but with kind designs of paternal goodness; and *we are corrected of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the* impenitent *world*, and consigned over to final and everlasting destruction.

sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 *Therefore, my brethren*, in one word, *when ye come together to eat* in those feasts, which frequently precede the administration of this ordinance among you, *wait* decently and respectfully *one for another*, till the whole assembly be 34 convened. *And if any one be* so *hungry*, that he cannot conveniently stay till that time, *let him eat at his own house;*[p] or at least take a kind of antepast, that may prevent any inconvenience arising from a little necessary delay; *that you may not come together to* your *condemnation*, and in such a manner, as to provoke the judgment of God against you. It may suffice to have said thus much, for the present, on this subject; *and what remains* farther to be adjusted, *I will regulate when I come* to Corinth; which if Providence answer my hopes, and succeed my schemes, will be in a little time.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT just matter of thankfulness to our blessed Redeemer, does that account of the institution of the *sacred supper* afford us, which St. Paul assures us *he received* immediately *from him*. Let us often reflect *it was in that very night in which*

Verse 23

[o] *Judge ourselves.*] Διακρινων, ver. 29. signifies *to distinguish*; here, διακρινομεν, signifies, *examining that we may distinguish*, and judge of our own character and fitness for the *sacrament*. Mr. Locke justly observes, that he is little attentive to St. Paul's writings who has not observed, that he often repeats a word he had used before, though in a sense something different from the preceding.

[p] *Let him eat at his own house.*] Mr. Amyraut and Mr. Cradock, (Apost. Hist. p. 174.) understand this, as a prohibition of *love-feasts*; but I think it evident from antiquity, they were retained in the church long after; though dubious whether they prevailed so soon.

he was betrayed, that his thoughts so compassionately wrought for our comfort and happiness; when it might have been imagined, that his mind would be entirely possessed with his personal concerns, with the doleful scene of his approaching sufferings. We learn from this account, the *perpetuity*, as well as the great leading design of the ordinance. *We shew forth the Lord's death*, and *we shew it forth till he come*. If we do indeed desire to preserve the memory of Christ's dying love in the world, if we desire to maintain in it our own souls, let us attend this blessed institution; endeavouring by the lively exercise of faith and love, to *discern*, and in a spiritual sense, to feed upon, *the Lord's body*. Nor let any humble and upright soul be discouraged, by these threatenings of judgment, to the profane sinners who offered such gross affronts to this holy solemnity; affronts, which none of us are in any danger of repeating. These scandalous excesses, when they pretended to be worshipping God on this great occasion, might justly provoke the eyes of his holiness, might awaken the arm of his indignation. Yet even these sinners *were chastised, that they might not be* finally and for ever *condemned*.

SECT. XXII.

Verse 26

29

32

Let not any then be terrified, as if every soul that approached the ordinance without due preparation, must by necessary consequence, *seal its own damnation*. Thus to attend the table of the Lord is indeed a sin; but blessed be God, not a sin too great to be forgiven. Let those therefore, who, though they feel in their hearts a reverential love to Christ, yet have hitherto refrained from attending this feast of love, be engaged to come; to come with due preparation, and *self examination*, as to their repentance and faith, their love and obedience; *then may they, with* the most hearty welcome from the great Lord of the feast, *eat of this bread, and drink of this cup*; receiving it as the *memorial of Christ's body broken*, and of *his blood shed for the remission of our sins*. Through that blood alone, let us seek this invaluable blessing, without which indeed, nothing can be a solid and lasting blessing to us: and let us, on every occasion, treat our brethren with a tenderness and respect becoming those who have considered ourselves and them, as redeemed by that precious blood, and indebted to it for the hopes of everlasting salvation.

28

24

In a word, let us never rest in the external rites or exercises of worship, how decently and regularly soever performed; but look to our inward temper, and to the conduct of our minds, if we desire to maintain their peace, and that our *coming together* should *be for the better, and not for the worse*.

SECT. XXIII.

The Apostle comes to treat on spiritual gifts; and introduces what he had farther to say concerning them, by observing, that various as they are, they all proceed from the same sacred Agent, and are intended for the edification of the same body, in which all Christians are united. 1 Cor. XII. 1—13.

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 1.

SECT. XXIII.

1 Cor. XII. 1

IT is *now* time I should proceed to speak something *concerning* those *spiritual* [*gifts,*] with which God hath been pleased so abundantly to bless you, my Corinthian *brethren:* and as to the right use and improvement of which, *I would not* by any means *have you ignorant.*

1 COR. XII. 1. NOW concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

2 Upon this head *you* in the general *know, that* during your natural state, before the cheering rays of the gospel broke in upon you, *ye were heathens*, without any knowledge of the true God, and *carried* by a blind implicit credulity *after dumb idols;* which were so far from being able to bestow on their votaries any supernatural endowments, by which they might be enabled to speak extraordinary truths, or in languages before unknown, that they were themselves destitute of the common powers of speech, or any capacity of perception and action. Yet you were blindly enslaved to the worship of such stupid forms, degrading as it evidently is to the rational nature of man; [*just*] *as you were led* by the artifice of your priests, who found their account in your delusions. And I hope therefore, you will always remember, that the unmerited goodness of God in bestowing such gifts on persons who could pretend so little claim to them, lays you under a lasting obligation to use them in the most dutiful and grateful manner.

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

3 And *therefore*[a] I hope you will not allow yourselves to despise any of your brethren, on

3 Wherefore, I

[a] *Therefore.*] The force of this particle διο, seems to be this; I am careful to give you the following hints concerning *spiritual gifts*, because in proportion to the degree in which God hath magnified his grace in calling you from idolatry to such extraordinary privileges and endowments, I am solicitous you may be preserved from abusing them, and engaged to improve them in the wisest and most faithful manner.

SECT. XXIII.

1 Cor. XII. 3.

give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

account of their deficiency in them; since there is an important sense in which they may all be said to have been enriched by Divine and supernatural influences. For *I give you to know*, and desire you to admit and retain it, as a principle equally certain and weighty; *that*, as *no one speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed;* [b] *and* consequently all pretences made to the Divine Spirit by the Jews are notoriously false and detestable; so, on the other hand, *no one can* sincerely *say*, [*that*] *Jesus* [*is the*] *Lord:*[c] none can embrace his religion, and support the profession of it in truth, *but by* the powerful operation of *the Holy Ghost* on his heart; and therefore, as you are all in a sense spiritual, it would be highly unreasonable, that the greatest should despise the least, on account of any distinction which may have been made in his favour; especially, when you consider who is the great source of all.

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

4 *Now there are diversities of gifts* in different persons, *but* there is one and *the same* Divine *Spirit*, from whom they are all derived;

5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

5 *And* though *there are diversities of administrations*, [d] there is one *and the same* common *Lord*, who appoints his ministers under their distinct offices, and gives them

[b] *Calleth Jesus accursed.*] Mr. Nathaniel Taylor, (on Deism, p. 60. 61.) thinks this refers in general to the test put on Christians, by their persecutors, that they should not only deny, but *blaspheme Christ*. This the Gentiles indeed required, (see Plin. Epist. x. 97. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. iv. 15.) But I rather think this refers to the Jews, who while they uttered blasphemies against Christ themselves. (1 Tim. i. 13.) and extorted them, if possible, from those they apprehended to be his disciples, (Acts xxvi. 11,) pretended to the gifts of the Spirit, by which they undertook to cast out devils; and perhaps they might imitate some of the exorcisms which Christians under the operation of the Spirit performed. Such a caution might therefore be very useful. (Compare 1 John iv. 1—3, which seems nearly parallel to this passage.) Dr. Owen pertinently observes, that the Jews sometimes call Jesus ימש, instead of ישוע; concealing their *blasphemy* under the three *initial letters* of the words, ימח שמו וזכרו, which signifies, *let his name and memory be blotted out*; which is equivalent to *Anathema, or let him be accursed*. Owen on the Spir. p. 3.

[c] Sincerely *say*, [*that*] *Jesus* [*is the*] *Lord*.] Chrysostom well observes, this phrase of *saying, that Jesus is the Messiah*, must be supposed to proceed from *true faith* in him; and the expression is used to import a man's being a *true Christian*, because such strong temptations lay against professing Christ under this character, that they who maintained this doctrine were in heart real believers; though there might be a few excepted instances. This seems as plain a proof as could be desired, that *true faith* is the work of the *Spirit* of God upon the heart. The third Letter to the Author of Christianity not founded on argument, p. 34—36.

[d] *Diversities of administrations.*] Calling them *administrations*, or *services*, (*διακονιων*,) was a gentle manner of reminding them of the great design of these *gifts*: and so of reproving those who perverted them to contrary purposes.

SECT. XXIII. 1 Cor. XII. 6.

their powers, their ability and their success. *And* though *there are diversities of operations* and effects produced, *yet it is* one and *the same God who worketh all* these effects *in all* the persons concerned; and they can pretend to nothing more than being the subjects, or at most, the instruments of his almighty and universal agency.

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

7 *But to every one* of his believing servants, who are thus honoured, *is given*, according to his wise and holy distribution, *a manifestation of the Spirit*: (for that our portion of gifts may properly be called:) and this in such a degree, *as is most* agreeable and *profitable* for the interest of the whole, that all may harmoniously carry on the great design of glorifying God, in the edification and happiness of the whole body.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

8 *For to one*, for instance, who is placed in the highest rank of the Christian church, *is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom*; a comprehensive view of that grand scheme in which the wisdom of God is so wonderfully displayed, that even angelic intelligences are continually admiring it: *to another, by the same Spirit*, such lower degrees of it, as may be called *the word of knowledge*;[e] whether respecting the meaning of the Old Testament, or other things in the Christian plan, which may render them superior to most of their brethren; though inferior

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

[e] *Word of wisdom—and of knowledge.*] There are, perhaps, few texts in the New Testament more difficult than some in this chapter, and in the xivth of this epistle, relating to the extraordinary gifts then in the church; which were at that time so well known, as not to need explication; and it is a noble instance of the genuine simplicity and modesty of the apostle, that he did not expatiate on so grand a subject with any unnecessary parade. I think the late Lord Barrington, and after him Dr Benson have made it highly probable that the *word of wisdom* was that extensive plan of Christianity which was revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit. See Barring. Misc. Sacr. Essay i. p. 39—41. Bens. Propa. of Christianity. Vol I. p. 40—46. But that the *word of knowledge* was, as they, after Dr. Whitby, assert, (Misc. Sacr. ibid. p. 42—45, and Bens. ibid p. 46—48,) an extraordinary ability to understand and explain the *Old Testament* and especially its *prophecies*, I do not think equally apparent. Perhaps it might be a lower degree of the *word of wisdom*. See Mr. Chandler on Joel, p. 135—157. In confirmation of which opinion it may be observed, that when *wisdom* and *knowledge*, (חכמה and דעת,) are mentioned together, *wisdom* is generally put first, as most excellent. Compare Eccles i. 16; chap. ii. 26; Isa. xxxiii 6; chap. xlvii. 10; Col. ii. 3. And it is well known that the highest orders of teachers in Israel were called anciently חכמים, *wise men*. See Deut. i. 13; chap. xvi. 19; 1 Cor. i. 20. Mr. Saurin explains *knowledge* of a *discerning of mysteries*; such as the appearance of Christ to change the *saints* found alive, the re-establishment of the Jews, the man of *sin*, the *beast*, &c. Saur. Serm. Vol. VI. p. 13.

SECT. XXIII.

1 Cor. XII. 9.

9 To another, faith, by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit;

to the class I mentioned above. *To another* is given such an extraordinary *faith*[f], *by the same Spirit*, that he can commit himself to the Divine protection in the midst of the extremest dangers; and is thereby qualified courageously to assert the truth of the gospel, in the very face of its most violent persecutors: *to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit*, in consequence of which, while under its operation, he can by a word, or a touch, remove the most inveterate diseases.

10 To another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, *divers* kinds of tongues, to another, the interpretation of tongues.

10 *To another, the working of miracles*[g] of a different kind, such as taking up serpents, drinking any deadly draught unhurt, and especially the ejection of demons: *to another*, the gift of *prophecy;* whereby he shall be able exactly to foretell some contingent future event: *to another, the discerning of spirits*, so as authoritatively to determine by what impulse any one speaks, who pretends to inspiration; or to be capable of pronouncing on the sincerity of men's professions, or their fitness for any public work to be assigned to them: *to another*, the gift of speaking with [*various*] *kinds of tongues*, which he had never had the natural means of acquiring: and *to another*, the no less useful, though less splendid endowment, which we distinguish from the former, by calling it *the interpretation of tongues*[h]; in consequence of which, a person shall be able to understand, and render into a known language, that which is spoken by a foreigner, in a tongue, with which neither he himself nor the other hearers, have been acquainted.

11 But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit,

11 *But the one and the same* almighty *Spirit worketh all these* diversities of

[f] *Faith.*] *Faith*, as an extraordinary gift, in this connection, must in the general signify, "a firm persuasion of being called out by God, at any particular time to perform some miracle, and accordingly going about it without any suspicion or fear, in confident dependence on a correspondent Divine interposition."

[g] *Working of miracles.*] It is difficult to distinguish this from *faith*, as explained above. Some understand it of some very *extraordinary* miracles, such as taking up *serpents*, drinking any deadly draught *unhurt*, curing diseases by a *shadow* passing over the patient, &c. Compare Mark xvi. 18; Acts v. 15. But I rather think, with Mons. Amyraut, (in his excellent paraphrase,) that *ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων*, may refer to the *dispossession of demons, or delivering persons over to them.* This *gift* and that of *healing*, might be comprehended *in faith;* but perhaps in some instances, it might work only in the one or the other of these effects.

[h] *To another, the gifts of tongues—to another, the interpretation of tongues.*] For the farther illustration of these clauses, and the interpretation here given, see the notes on chap. xiv. 28.

SECT. XXVII. 1 Cor. XII. 11.

gifts, *dividing unto every one severally as he thinketh fit*[i]; his wisdom fixes the scheme, what this variety should be; and his sovereign pleasure determines, why they should be imparted to such and such particular persons, rather than 12 to others. The variety, I say, is wisely appointed; *for as the body is one, and* yet *hath many members, but all the members of that one body, many as they are, constitute one body* united in one well regulated system; *so also* [*is*] *Christ,* that is, the whole society of which Christ is the head; and for the whole of which he may, as it 13 were, be put, being indeed all and in all *For by,* and according to the operation of *one Spirit we* Christians *are all baptized into one body, whether* we be originally *Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or freemen*; the religion we before professed, whether true or false, the rank which we now hold in life, whether high or low, makes no difference as to the grand point; our union with the body is the same; and the same happy consequences follow from that union. *And* this in particular, that *we are all made to drink into one Spirit*[k]; as we drink of the same sacramental cup, so we do by our communion with Christ, whose blood is represented by it, all imbibe the influences of the same Spirit, by which the Divine life was at first produced, and 14 is continually preserved. I say, we have all imbibed it; as the whole body may be said to imbibe the wine, which enters in at the mouth, and descends to the stomach; yet it is not intended *for* the benefit of those members alone, but of the whole; so, in like manner, *the body is not one member, but many;* yet so united, that the Spirit, imparted to one, is designed, whether in its miraculous operations, or sanctifying influences, for the benefit of the whole.

dividing to every man severally as he will.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit

14 For the body is not one member, but many

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us thankfully acknowledge the Divine goodness, that we have not been *led on* after the example of our Pagan ancestors,

[i] *As he thinketh fit.*] Βουλεται does not so much express arbitrary pleasure, as a determination founded on *wise* counsel.

[k] *Drink into one Spirit.*] Mr. Locke thinks St. Paul refers to the sacramental *cup* rather than the *bread* here, because the wine is more spirituous, and in a lively manner represents the animating effects of Christ's blood, and the Spirit communicated by it.

to the vain worship of *dumb* and stupid *idols;* but have been taught from our infancy, to adore the *living Jehovah.* May we, in the most solemn and consistent manner, say, *That Jesus is the Lord!* And while our actions speak a regard to him as such, may it appear, that our hearts are under the influences of the Spirit of God, by which alone men are brought to that Divine temper.

SECT. XXIII.

Verse 2, 3

Let us often reflect upon those glorious attestations which were given to the truth of our holy religion, by that diversity of gifts and operations with which its first teachers were furnished and adorned. Let us thankfully receive their testimony, and thereby set to our seal, that God is true. And let a view to that great design, in which all these wonderful things centre, engage us to study more an union of heart, with all who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In him Greeks and Barbarians, bound and free, are united. His glory therefore let all unanimously seek; and while his name is blasphemed by the ignorant and malignant, who cannot bear the purity of that religion which he teaches, may it so be defended by us, as at the same time to be exemplified and adorned.

4, &c.

SECT. XXIV.

The Apostle, farther to enforce that humility in the use of their spiritual gifts, and that mutual affection which the Corinthians so much needed to be farther taught, goes on, in prosecution of the allegory used above, to represent Christians as so united in one body as to have entirely the same interest; and insists on a tender care of the least member, from its subservience to the good of the whole. 1 Cor. XII. 15, *to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 15.

1 COR. XII. 15.

IF the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not

IT is of the highest importance, in your present circumstances, for the honour of God, and your comfort and edification, in the use of the gifts with which God hath endowed you, that I should farther illustrate and enforce the observation I have just been making, that the body is not one member, but made up of the conjunction of many, which have various offices and purposes. None can therefore complain of its own situation, as if it were insignificant; nor should any despise another, as unworthy of regard. As to the first of these, *if the foot should say, Because I am not the hand,* but am placed in the lowest order, rest upon the ground, and

SECT. XXIV.

1 Cor. XII. 13.

SECT. XXIV. 1 Cor. XII. 16.

am often covered with dirt, therefore *I am not of the body; is it* indeed *for this, not* any part *of the body;* or would it have reason to represent itself, as on this account an out-cast? *And if the ear should say, Because I am not* so visible, so beautiful, so useful as *the eye,* therefore *I am not of the body; is it* indeed, *for this* reason *not of the body?* Is it not a very important and useful part? Yea, is not the body far more perfect, in consequence of the foot, and the ear, being what they respectively are, than it would be, if each of them were another hand, or another

17 eye? For *if the whole body [were,]* as it were, *an eye*[a] and a man could look at will, through every pore; *where [were] the hearing,* that important sense, which admits so much pleasing entertainment and improvement? And *if the whole [were] hearing, where [were] the smelling* a sense which though less important than the former, is not destitute of its proper delight

18 and its proper use? *But now* we see, that *God,* the great and wise Creator, *hath placed the* various *members, every one of them in the body as he hath seen fit;* and his inimitable contrivance, and overflowing goodness, is glorified in their

19 variety and in their arrangement. *But if* they *all were one member,* or the members all of one form and use, *where [were] the body?* How could it possibly subsist? What a monstrous thing would such a detached member be, if it could be supposed to exist alone? Or if each member were to be transformed into that which might in itself seem most noble, how ruinous to the whole would such a transformation be?

20 *But now,* as *[there are] many members,* there is in the union of them all, *but one* harmonious regular *body,* furnished for the various animal functions, and capable of a variety of sensations

21 and actions. *And* no one of them ought to despise any of the rest; for *the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee;* since by the hand the body is maintained and fed, and the

of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? if the whole *were* hearing, where *were* the smelling?

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where *were* the body

20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need

[a] *If the whole body [were] an eye,* &c.] The apostle by this intends probably to insinuate, that, were there no other gifts in the church but those which they so much extolled in some of their teachers, it would be a very great disadvantage to the body.

1 Cor. XII. 21

of thee: nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

eye itself preserved and defended. *And again, the head*, elevated as it is, and so admirably furnished with all the nerves and organs planted in it, [*cannot say*] *to the* most distant and extreme parts, even the *feet*, mean as their form and office seems, *I have no need of you;* since by means of them, the head, and all the other parts of the body, are supported, and removed from place to place.

22 Nay, much more, those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.

22 *But* it may farther be observed here, agreeably to the point which I have now in view, that *the members of the body, which appear to be weaker*[b] than the rest, and perhaps are most delicate and tender in their structure, *are more abundantly necessary*, so that without them the animal functions can by no means be discharged.

23 And those *members* of the body which, we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour, and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

24 For our comely *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked;

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

23 *And* so likewise with respect to *those which seem to be the more* ignoble and *dishonourable* [*parts*[c]] *of the body, those we surround with more abundant honour*[d]; *and* those which seem *our uncomely* [*parts*] *have*, by virtue of the dress we put upon them, *more abundant comeliness* than most of the rest. 24 *For our comely* and graceful [*parts*] *have no need* of being so adorned, as they appear to greater advantage uncovered: *but God hath* so *attempered* the several parts of *the body together*, as *to give* a *more abundant honour to that which is* so formed, as rather to appear *deficient;* for by making the meanest part thus necessary, he hath entitled it to the care of the noblest: 25 *That* so *there might be no schism in the body*, no division of separate interests; *but* [*that*] all *the members might have the same care of each other*, as being each an important

[b] *Appear to be weaker.*] Some think this refers to the *brains*, and *bowels*, which are very tender, and liable to many disorders. Others understand it, of the least *muscular parts*, or *veins*, *arteries*, and other minute channels in the body, the least obstruction in which would be fatal. If *more feeble*, be put for *less noble*, it suggests a very obvious and important sense, relating to the channels by which nature has provided for throwing off the dregs; which, dishonourable as they may seem, are so necessary that if they be obstructed, intense torment and inevitable death must ensue.

[c] *Our dishonourable parts*, &c.] It seems, as if he had said, *the face*, on which the image of God is particularly stamped, we leave uncovered; but as for those parts, which decency, or custom, teaches us to conceal, we contrive not only to cover, but also as far as we conveniently can, to *adorn* by covering.

[d] *We surround with more abundant honour:* τουτοις τιμην περισσοτεραν περιτιθεμεν.] Our version by no means expresses the force of the Greek idiom here.

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1 Cor. XII. 26.

part of the whole. *So that if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it*[e], and are concerned to remove the complaint; *or if one member be honoured* and adorned, *all the members rejoice with it*: the ornament of one part being looked upon as that of the whole.

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it: or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

27 *Now* to apply this to the purpose for which I introduced it: *you are* all *the body of Christ, and* 28 *members* [*each*] *in particular*. *And* as *God hath placed some* members in more eminent stations in the body; so also some Christians *in the church*. He hath placed in the *first* rank, *apostles*; who are honoured with an office of the highest distinction, and furnished with endowments peculiar to themselves. *In the second place*, are ranked *prophets*; whose business it is to foretel future events, or to speak by immediate inspiration, for the edification of the church. *In the third*, *teachers*, of a more ordinary kind, *afterwards*, those who are endowed, upon some particular occasion, with [*miraculous*] *powers*; *then the gifts of healing* diseases by anointing the sick with oil, and praying for their recovery. Besides these, he has endowed some with such extraordinary activity and sagacity, as may fit them to be *helpers* in the management of charities; others are qualified by their prudence to be *governments*[f], by whose advice, the affairs of societies may be steered and conducted in the safest and happiest manner: there are also wonderful operations, by which men are taught [*different*] *kinds of tongues*, which they had never learned by any human methods.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

[e] *If one member suffer*, &c.] Bos, in his Exercitations on this text, has collected many parallel passages from Seneca, and other heathen writers.

[f] *Helps,—governments*, &c.] I think, we can only guess at the meaning of these words; not having principles on which to proceed in fixing them absolutely. I have inserted what seemed to me most probable in the paraphrase. The Author of Miscellanea Sacra thinks, much light is to be derived, by comparing verses 8—10, with verses 28—38, the order in one text corresponding with that of the other; but the order of the same words differing in the two places demonstrates the contrary. I have met with no remark here, which seems more pertinent than that of Mons. Amyraut; who thinks, that the same persons might possess many of these gifts, and sustain several of these characters, which were not stated distinct offices; and might be called helpers, in reference to their great dexterity and readiness to help those in distress; and governments, in regard to that genius for business, sagacity in judging the circumstances of affairs, and natural authority in the councils and resolutions of societies, which rendered them fit to preside on such occasions.

SECT. XXIV.

1 Cor. XII. 29.

29 *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Now as the offices of the church are different, the gifts by which men are fitted to discharge them, are proportionably so. [*Are*] *all* the members or ministers of the church, *apostles?*[g] Yea, [*are*] *all*, who are subordinate to them, *prophets?* Or [*are*] *all* that sort of inferior *teachers*, whom I observed to stand in the third class? [*Have*] *all* those [*miraculous*] *powers*, which I have again and again mentioned? Or, to in-30 stance only in one of the lowest of them, *have all the gifts of healing* diseases, in that extraordinary manner in which some have effected it? Yea, *do all speak with tongues* which they have never learned? Or *do all* others find themselves able to act in that lower sphere I spoke of before, and to *interpret* into their native language, or any other, what has been uttered in a tongue to them generally unknown? These things are well worthy your considera-31 tion; *but* instead of attending to them, *ye contend earnestly about the best* or most shining *gifts;*[h] envying, *and* it may be, detracting from the superior endowments of others. *Yet I shew you a way of the highest excellence*, to which it will be your greatest wisdom carefully to attend.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 18

THE wisdom and goodness of God, as displayed in the formation of the human body, is a subject that well deserves our attentive reflection, and humble acknowledgment. All its several parts are useful to the whole; and the most noble cannot upbraid the meanest as an incumbrance. Each has reason to 20 rejoice in its own situation, as well as in the addition of all the rest; and were the lowest placed higher than it is, it would become useless, burdensome, and monstrous.

Let us acknowledge the same hand in the wise subordination,

[g] *Are all apostles,* &c.] It appears that this invidious temper was not extirpated from among the Corinthians, even by this just and lively expestulation; for Clemens Romanus, writing to them many years after, complains of its continued prevalence, as leading them to neglect a due regard to *those presbyters, who were according to Divine direction fixed among them, and to throw them out of their episcopal office.* See Clem. Epistle to the Cor. Sec. 44.

[h] *Ye contend earnestly about the best gifts,* &c.] I doubt not but this is the just rendering of ζηλουτε τα χαρισματα τα κρειττονα: for it seems contradictory to suppose, that after the apostle had been shewing them, that these *gifts* were not at their own option, and that they ought not to emulate the *gifts* of each other, nor to aspire to superiority; he should in effect unsay all again, and give them such centrary advice.

SECT. XXIV. appointed in civil societies, and in the church of Christ. Let none be discouraged at the low station wherein they are fixed, but rather let all acquiesce in the prudent and gracious disposal of the supreme Lord, and apply themselves to their proper functions. Let each member consider all the rest with pleasure; and rejoice with thankfulness, in the health and vigour of the other parts, making the proper use of them, and communicating in return its proper services. If any be weak let all strengthen it. If there be any blemish and imperfection in any part, let all the rest tenderly cover it; unless when a regard to the health and happiness of the whole, requires that it should be laid open, and searched in order to its being cured. And upon the whole, so far as we can prevent it, let there be *no schism in the body*. Alas, that there should be so many breaches and contentions! Let us lament them; let each in his place endeavour to heal them; and unite in a sympathizing care of one another. So shall we best express our regard to our common Head; so shall we, in the remotest consequences, best consult our own interest and honour.

Verse 23

25

28 Blessed be God that he hath, in his church, given not only apostles, and prophets, but also pastors and teachers! Adored be that bounty with which he hath scattered down his gifts, whether ordinary or extraordinary, on the children of men. Let all be used, not to the purposes of ostentation, but of edification. And let us be desirous of those whereby we may bear most of the image of Christ, and may most promote the great design for which he visited this low world of ours, and was pleased to unite his church unto himself, and its several members to each other, in such dear and indissoluble bonds.

SECT. XXV.

To engage the Corinthians to cultivate charity, as more excellent and important than any of those gifts about which they were so ready to contend, the Apostle gives a most lovely description of it; which he concludes with a reflection on its perpetual duration, in which it exceeds even the graces of faith and of hope. 1 Cor. XIII. *throughout.*

1 CORINTHIANS XIII. 1.

I HAVE been urging you to pursue something more excellent than any of those gifts about which some among you have been so ready to contend; and I have recommended it as a more excellent way. That of which I speak, is that incomparable and Divine grace of LOVE; which indeed is not only of the highest excel-

1 COR. XIII. 1.

THOUGH I speak

1 Cor. XIII. 1

with the tongues of men, and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.

lence, but of absolute necessity. For *if I* were to *speak with* all *the* variety of *tongues*[a] which are used among all the nations *of men, and* were capable of employing them even with the eloquence of *angels,* and knew their celestial dialect; *but have not love*[b] to God and my fellow-creatures, be my strains of discourse ever so harmonious, or ever so sublime, *I am become* but *sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal,*[c] at best but like an instrument of music, and hardly worthy to be compared to an instrument of the nobler kind. So little delight would any of my most pompous performances give to God, or to any of his most valuable creatures, who should know that love was wanting, that I might as well think to recommend myself to acceptance, by the noisy clank made by brazen instruments, in the worship of Isis or Cybele. *And if,* besides those gifts of tongues and eloquence, *I have* that of *prophesying*, so as to foretel the most distant and important future events; *and know all* these *mysteries* which have hitherto been concealed from the most penetrating *and* illuminated eyes; or have *all* the exactest *knowledge* of religion, or any other object that can be supposed the subject of my inquiries; *and if,* joined with this, *I have all* the most miraculous *faith*,[d] by virtue of which I should be able to produce effects that might amaze the whole world, *so as to remove mountains* from their basis, to transport them from one part of the earth to another, and to change the whole face of nature with a word; *but* with all these wonderous endowments, *have not love,* simple as that

[a] *Speak with the tongues,* &c.] Dr. Whitby shews, by a great many admirable quotations, both from Josephus and the Jewish rabbies, how much each of these things was regarded by the Jews which St. Paul here speaks of as absolutely of no avail without charity.

[b] *Have not love.*] Αγαπη is not so properly rendered *charity*. It must here be taken in the noblest sense, for such a *love* to the *whole* church, and the *whole* world, as arises from principles of true *piety,* and ultimately centres in God.

[c] *Tinkling cymbal.*] Mr. Locke very justly remarks, that as a cymbal was made of two pieces of hollow brass, which being struck together made a tinkling, with very little variety of sound; St. Paul chose to instance in this, rather than in a harp, or flute, or any other more harmonious instrument of music. See Commentar. de Cymbalis, at the end of Fortuita Sacra.

[d] Most miraculous *faith.*] As it is here supposed that this *faith* might in fact be separated from *love;* it cannot signify the same, as in the epistle to the Romans; where it is such an assent to a Divine declaration as produces a suitable temper and conduct.

SECT. XXV.

1 Cor. XIII. 3

principle is, and comparatively mean as it may be esteemed, yet for want of it, *I am nothing*[e] in the sight of God, and have in reality no true worth and excellence. *And* I may farther add, that no external act of charity, or of zeal, will signify any thing, if this inward principle, which should be the life of all, be wanting; for *if I distribute all my goods in alms* for the sustenance of the poor, *and deliver up my body to be burnt* in defence of religion itself, and do it from a secret desire of human applause, and ostentation of charity, or of piety; *but have not* in the sight of God that *love* to which I make so high a pretence, *I shall receive no advantage by it;* but in the day of final account, my Judge, instead of applauding and rewarding me as a saint and a martyr, will condemn me as a wicked and vain-glorious hypocrite.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have no charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Indeed the properties of this love which I am now recommending, are such, that one would imagine the description of them should be enough to charm the whole world to pursue it. Sufficiently must that shew how happy it renders the soul which is under its influence, as well as how amiable such must be both to God and man. For *love suffereth long* injuries [*and*] provocations, without being transported into rage, or instigated to revenge. On the contrary, under all this ill usage it *is* gentle and *kind. Love envieth not* the advantages which others enjoy; but rather takes pleasure in them, and by friendly participation makes them its own. *Love is not insolent* and over-bearing,[f] does not act with such precipitancy and rashness as pride and ill-nature often hurry men into; but engages us with tenderness to look round on those about us, lest we should by any means harm them before we are aware. Love *is not* presently *puffed up* with arrogant self-conceit, on account of any

4 Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

[e] *I am nothing.*] A person so eminently favoured by God, as this description supposes, yet destitute of true piety and benevolence, must be very contemptible, and justly odious.

[f] *Is not insolent,* &c.] The Greek word περπερος, from whence the verb here used is derived, signifies *rash and inconsiderate;* so that the word must here import, "one that acts with such precipitancy and inconsideration as pride and "ill-nature often hurry people into," which charity would preserve them from, and induce that tenderness and caution which engages us to look about us, that we may do ourselves, and others, no harm.

SECT. XXV.

1 Cor. XIII. 5.

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.

distinguished station, or peculiar endowment, which a man may possess; nor outwardly boasteth of these things, or inwardly overvalueth itself upon them. Love *doth not behave indecently*[g], in a manner unbecoming a person's station, age, or circumstances. Love *seeketh not her own things* but makes all reasonable concessions in any point of self-interest, where any superior interest of others is concerned. Love *is not exasperated*, and thrown into bitter and implacable resentments, even where the usage it meets with is most apparently unjust; and where the intention is dubious, it *imputeth not evil;* but puts the kindest construction upon the action itself, or the principle from whence it proceeds, which the nature of circumstances may by any means allow.

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth;

6 Love *rejoiceth not at iniquity;* it takes no pleasure to see an adversary fall into a crime by which his reputation should be blasted, and his interest ruined; *but*, on the contrary, it *rejoiceth with others in the truth*, and is pleased, when its greatest enemies behave themselves in a manner agreeable to the word of God, and the reason of things.

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

7 Far from delighting to blaze abroad the faults of others, it *covereth all things* that are amiss, so far as it can lawfully conceal them; all, which benevolence to the public, or kindness to an individual does not require them to make known. It is not apt to suspect the integrity and veracity of others; but rather, knowing itself to be sincere, *believeth all things*, so far as with the most candid allowances it rationally can; and where it is constrained to confess that many things are wrong, it is unwilling to treat the worst of mankind as utterly incorrigible; but *hopeth all things*, and with that hope supports itself in every kind effort it can make for their recovery; and as it is long-suffering with regard to human provocations, so from the hand of God it *endureth all things*, even the most sharp and heavy afflictions, ac-

g *Does not behave indecently.*] I cannot read this passage without thinking of the venerable Mr. Hale's story of the lancet concealed in a spunge, in order to open an impostbumated part without giving any alarm to the patient who dreaded the operation. There is great reason to believe, that in all this description, the apostle had in his mind that contrast to this beautiful character which was so prevalent among the Corinthians, as is evident from many passages in both these epistles.

SECT. XXV.

quiescing in his will, trusting in his care, and rejoicing, if its own sufferings may be a means of consolation and edification to others.

1 Cor. XIII. 8.

And farther to recommend this excellent principle of *love*, give me leave to observe, that it is a grace which *never faileth*; but will accompany and adorn us to all eternity, and indeed makes a very essential part of our preparation for the heavenly world; in which it hath an apparent advantage over many of those gifts which some are so ready to emulate and pursue, to the neglect and injury of love. *But whether* men admire *prophecies*, it is fit *they* should know they *shall be abolished*, when the faith of God's people shall no longer need to be encouraged, nor their devotion to be assisted, by such exhortations and instructions as are necessary now: *or whether* they boast themselves of the variety of *tongues, they shall cease* in those celestial regions: one speech and one language shall prevail among all the blessed inhabitants, *and* the languages of earth be forgotten, as too low and imperfect. Yea I may add, that a great deal of that *knowledge*, which we now pursue with the greatest eagerness, and which is very conducive to our present usefulness among mankind, *shall* then *be abolished*[h] and superseded, as referring to things altogether antiquated and passed away; or swallowed up in discoveries so much clearer, stronger, and more important, that it shall appear, in comparison of them, as nothing.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 *For* now *we know* but *in part, and we prophesy* but *in part*; there is a great deal of obvious imperfection attending all our knowledge, and all the services we can here perform for God and for his church:

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 *But when that which is perfect is come*, as in the heavenly state it shall, then *that* [*which is*] only *in part, shall be abolished*: all these slow and un-

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

[h] *Knowledge shall be abolished.*] This cannot refer to all kind of knowledge; for the noblest shall be much improved. Some think it here signifies, that of *Old Testament mysteries*, which will be superseded in that world where scripture shall be of no farther use; and hence some have farther argued for that interpretation of the *word of knowledge* which was spoken of above, (chap. xii. 8.) But the explication given in the paraphrase, seems more natural and unexceptionable. To trace the gradual openings of the Christian scheme through the various dispensations of God to the church, may be an important part of the celestial happiness.

1 Cor. XIII. 10

satisfactory methods of obtaining knowledge, and all the little stock we have here laid up, shall be exchanged for the most extensive views of whatever it can be desirable to know, opening upon the mind in the most easy, clear, and delightful manner.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

11 It shall indeed be like a state of adult age, when compared with that of feeble infancy. Just as *when I was a child, I spake as a child* would naturally do, a few imperfect words, hardly at first articulate and intelligible, and often in themselves unmeaning; *I was affected as a child*, thrown into transports of joy or grief on trifling occasions, which manly reason soon taught me to despise; *I reasoned as a child*, in a weak, inconclusive, and sometimes ridiculous manner. *But when* my faculties ripened, and *I became a man, I put away the things of the child*, and felt sentiments, and engaged in pursuits, correspondent to such advancement of age and reason.

12 For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as also I am known.

12 Such shall be the improvements of the heavenly state, in comparison with those which the most eminent Christian can attain here. *For we now see* the most noble objects of our intellectual view, *in an ambiguous* and obscure *manner*, as we discern distant objects *by means of a* glass or *mirror*[t], which reflects only their imperfect forms, so that, (as when riddles are proposed to us,) our understandings are often confounded with the uncertain and indeterminate appearances of things. *But then* we shall see, not the faint reflection, but the objects themselves, *face to face*, in as distinct a manner as we could wish. *Now I know* [*but*] *in part*, and though the light of an immediate revelation from heaven has been imparted to me in many instances, and in an extraordinary manner, I am sensible how great a part is still kept under the veil. *But then* it shall be taken off, and *I shall know, even as also I am known*, in an intuitive and comprehensive manner; so that my

[t] *By means of a mirror.*] This is the exact rendering of δι' εσοπ]ρ[illegible]. It is well known, that the use of dioptric glasses in telescopes, did not prevail [illegible] many ages after the date of this epistle. And the Seventy use this word for the women's looking-glasses, or mirrors of metal, out of which Moses made the laver Exod. xxxviii. 8

SECT. XXV. 1 Cor. XIII. 12

knowledge shall bear some fair resemblance to that of the Divine Being, which, while our notices of things hover about their surface, penetrates to the very centre of every object, and sees through my soul, and all things, as at one single glance.

13 And thus upon the whole it appears, and I hope you will remember and consider it; that *there now abide these three* most excellent graces, *faith, hope, and love;* each of them far to be preferred to the most shining gifts about which you can contend. *But the greatest of these* graces [*is*] *love;* which most directly transforms us into the image of God, and which shall continue to exert all its influence, when faith is superseded by sight, and hope by enjoyment.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

IMPROVEMENT.

SURELY after having attentively surveyed the beautiful description which the apostle gives us of this Divine grace, *love*, it cannot be necessary that its cause should be farther pleaded. It speaks for itself; speaks to our very hearts. But O, who that enters into the description, must not mourn, that its angelic form is so much a stranger to multitudes who bear the Christian name! So that in many instances it can hardly pass uncensured; while those extremes which most evidently violate it, are often consecrated under honourable names, and men build much of their hopes of heaven, on breathing what is indeed the temper of hell. How many that stile themselves Christians, can *endure no provocations*, can *cover no faults* of their brethren, *can keep themselves within no bounds*, can *believe nothing* to *their* advantage, against whom, on party-principles, they have entertained prejudices! They *vaunt themselves, they are puffed up* with the conceit of their own wisdom, *they behave unseemly, they seek only their own* reputation and profit, they *believe the worst* they can hear of others, and *suspect* more than they hear; *they envy* those whose endowments and stations are superior to their own, and instead of labouring themselves to excel, they affect by calumny and slander to bring down their brethren to their own level, or rather, as far as possible, below it. Alas, that the dictates of our Divine Master, and the genius of our religion, are so little understood, are no more regarded! and that we so entirely forget the precepts of Christianity, as not to remember even those of common humanity.

Verse 4 &c.

Yet surely, if these precepts are wholly forgotten, it is in vain

that we remember, or contend for any of its doctrines and principles. As *all languages and gifts, so all knowledge and faith is vain*, if it be separate from love, by which true faith always operates.

SECT. XXV.

Let us cultivate *love* more and more; and so much the rather, as it is a plant of the *celestial paradise;* which will there for ever flourish, *when tongues shall cease*, and that *knowledge*, on which men value themselves highly, *shall* utterly *vanish*. The ripeness of adult age, and the knowledge of the most improved sciences, human or divine, is but as the trifling of an infant, when compared with that manly and perfect state after which we are aspiring. The dim mirror of faith shall then be laid aside; and the truth of the objects, now so imperfectly discerned, shall in full lustre be presented to our eye, purged from every film, and strengthened for a brightness which would now overwhelm it. In the mean time, attending humbly to the narrow limits, and necessary obscurity, of our present knowledge, let us not be puffed up in ourselves, let us not despise others; but by a modest estimate, and a faithful improvement, of such degrees of light as God shall be pleased to afford us, let us press on towards the regions of eternal day; where in his light we shall see light, and where amidst the fullest communications of his love, we shall for ever love him, and each other, with ardours, which the best hearts in their best moments on earth, can neither attain nor conceive.

Verse 1, 2, 8, 10, 11, 12

SECT. XXVI.

The Apostle cautions the Corinthians against that vain ostentation of the gift of tongues, which was so prevalent among them; and reasons with them concerning the absurdity of the manner in which that gift was abused by some of them. 1 Cor. XIV. 1—19.

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 1.

1 COR. XIV. 1.

FOLLOW after charity, and de-

I HAVE exhorted, and I would still exhort you, my brethren, to *pursue love*,[a] to cultivate it to the utmost of your power, in your own breasts, and in all around you, not grudging any labour, necessary to promote so excellent a cause. Yet I would not lead you to slight any

SECT. XXVI. 1 Cor. XIV. 1.

[a] *Pursue love.*] The word διωκετε, properly signifies, "to pursue with an eagerness like that with which hunters "follow their game." And it may be intended to intimate, how hard it is to obtain and preserve such a truly benevolent spirit, in the main series of life; considering, on the one hand, how many provocations we are like to meet with, and on the other, the force of self-love, which will in so many instances be ready to break in upon it.

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1 Cor. XIV. 1.

inferior endowment, by which the edification of the church may be promoted. I permit you therefore, zealously to *desire spiritual* [*gifts*,] so far as submission to God, the great Dispenser of them, and love to your brethren may admit. *But* I would *especially* urge you to desire and pray, *that ye may* be enabled to *prophesy*, in that sense of the word in which we commonly use it, to express the gift whereby we are enabled to explain scripture, and publicly to discourse of Divine things, in an instructive and edifying manner; for by this you may hope to do the 2 greatest good. *For he that speaketh in a tongue*,[b] unknown to the auditory to whom he addresses himself, *speaks* in effect *not to men, but to God; for no one* else present *understands* [*him*;] and as God alone knows the truth and importance of what he says, so it is all lost on the audience, *though in the spirit he speak* the most sublime 3 *mysteries: Whereas he that prophesieth*, in the sense in which I now use the word, that is, discourses of Divine things in a known language, *speaketh to men*, and affords them *edification, and exhortation and comfort*, according to the particular tenor and contents of what he says. 4 And thus, on the most favourable concessions that can be made, *he that speaketh with a tongue, edifies himself*[c] only, if peradventure his own good affections may be awakened by the truth he fervently delivers; and the consciousness of that miraculous power which he feels working in him, may farther establish his faith in Christianity; *but he that prophesies*, while he has a share of this advantage, *edifies the church* also,

sire spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy.

2 For he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth *him*; howbeit in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3 But he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort.

4 He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, edifieth himself: but he that prophesieth, edifieth the church.

[b] *He that speaketh in a tongue* unknown, &c.] Dr. Whitby thinks, that the gifts of languages and prophecy were always to be found in the same person; but that the first was permanent, the other transient. Yet it seems to me very conceivable, either might be without the other. The miraculous instamping, as it were, on a man's mind a new language, would enable him to speak all he knew in it; but his fitness to discourse in public, as well as his capacity of predicting future events, were matters quite of another nature.

[c] *Edifieth himself.*] After all that is said in the paraphrase, to prove that this might be possible, it was much more probable, that a man might be hurt, than edified, by the exercise of this gift, when attended with such ostentatious circumstances. But the apostle, according to that happy address for which he was so remarkable, makes his supposition most honourable and favourable to the person reproved; as Hector ascribes the retreat of Paris from the battle, to resentment against the Trojans, rather than to cowardice. Hom. Iliad. lib. vi. verse 326; and Eustaph. in loc.

by taking those methods which are most likely to promote the number of its converts, and to do good to those who are already gathered into it.

SECT. XXVI.

1 Cor. XIV. 5.

5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth, than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

For my own part, far from envying any of your gifts, *I wish* them increased, and *indeed that ye all spake with tongues*, in as great a variety as I myself can, or as God hath imparted the gift to any man living: *but* on the whole, I had much *rather, that ye might* all *prophesy; for* when we come to consider the different effects and tendencies of these different gifts, we must own that, with respect to the prospects of usefulness, by which these things are much to be estimated, *he that prophesieth* [*is*] *greater than he who speaketh with tongues*[d] which the auditory cannot understand, *except he interpret* what he says, *that the church may receive edification*: and even then, his speaking with an unintelligible tongue is but an unnecessary incumbrance, which it would be much more modest and prudent to omit.

6 Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine?

6 *Now*, as perhaps you will apprehend this better by an example, suppose it were your own case, *brethren : if I came to you*, the next time I make you a visit at Corinth, *speaking* to you *with* a variety of unknown *tongues, what shall I profit you*, who are supposed not to understand me, *unless I speak* not merely in your hearing, but *to you*, that is, in a language with which you are acquainted? Else all is absolutely lost, whatever my message may be, *whether* I speak *by* the *revelation* of some gospel doctrine and mystery, *or* by *knowledge*[e] in the explication of some controverted text in the Old Testament, *or* by *prophesy* in the prediction of some future

[d] *He that prophesieth*, &c.] How happily does the apostle teach us to estimate the value of gifts and talents, not by their brilliancy, but *usefulness. Speaking with tongues*, was indeed very serviceable for spreading the gospel abroad; but for those who staid at home, it was much more desirable to be able to discourse well on useful subjects in their own language; which might serve more for the improvement of the society they belonged to, and the conviction of such of their unbelieving neighbours, as might out of curiosity happen to step into their assemblies Compare verse 23—25.

[e] *Revelation, or knowledge*, &c.] I am not certain how far different ideas are to be affixed to each of these words; or supposing that, how far these are the appropriated ideas intended by each; but I could think of no more proper explication; and must number this among the many texts which I dare not pretend fully to understand.

SECT. XXVI.

event, *or* by *doctrine* for the regulation of life and manners.

1 Cor. XIV. 7. *So also inanimate things which give a sound, whether* it be *pipe or harp*, or any other instrument of music, *unless they give a due distinction* in the variety *of sounds* proceeding from them, *how can it be known what is piped or harped?* How should dancers be directed by music, unless the proper tone and modulation be 8 duly maintained? *Moreover*, in war, *if the trumpet give an uncertain sound*, so that there is an undistinguishable mixture of various kinds of notes; *who should prepare himself to battle?* Could soldiers know, when to advance, or when to retreat, unless the trumpet's sound be ad-9 justed and constantly adhered to? *So likewise* in your religious assemblies, *unless ye utter by the tongue significant words*, to which the ear of your auditory are accustomed, *how shall it be known what you speak? For ye shall* be in that case as those that *speak to the air*, or make a mere inarticulate noise; and I leave you to judge, how absurd it would be, to bring such unmeaning sounds into the worship of God, as ye would not endure in the common affairs of life.

7 And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

9 So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

10 *There may be ever so many sorts of language in the world*, perhaps as many as there are persons in your most numerous assemblies; *and none of them* is *without* its proper *signification* among those that use it; there are great numbers that inhabit the same region, who perfect-11 ly understand it. *Yet unless I know the* proper *force* and import *of the* particular *language* which is used in my hearing, no one can converse with me; and I shall in vain ask an explication in my own; for *I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh* [*shall be*] *a barbarian to me;* and if the language be ever so copious, harmonious, expressive and polite, I shall hardly be able to distinguish it 12 from that of the most unpolished savage. *So* that on the whole, I must urge it upon *you also*, that *seeing ye desire spiritual* [*gifts,*] and are ready to vie with each other in the excellence of them, ye *seek to abound* [*in them*] *for the edification of the church*, and not merely for your

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.

11 Therefore, if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian; and he that speaketh *shall be* a barbarian unto me.

12 Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church.

own honour according to those rules of honour which you may too rashly lay down to yourselves.

1 Cor. XIV. 13

13 Wherefore, let him that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue, pray that he may interpret.

Therefore let him that speaketh in a tongue generally unknown to the congregation to which he would address himself, *pray that he may* be able rather to *interpret* the discourse of another, than to amuse, or indeed, amaze and weary the audience by the ostentatious exercise of the gift he has already received, and with which he is fond of making a vain parade. 14 *For if I pray in a* strange and unknown *tongue*, without making use of any explication, *my spirit* indeed *prays*, and I may have true devotion of heart towards God, as I understand the language myself; *but my understanding is* in this respect *unfruitful* as to others,[f] and I perform an action void of that prudence and good sense which ought always to govern in my addresses to God, and act so childish and foolish a part, that the reason of a man may seem at that time to have deserted me.

14 For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

15 *What then is* [*my duty*] in these circumstances? Truly it is plain enough; it requires me to say, *I will pray with the spirit*, exercising the faculties of my own soul in devotion; *but I will pray with the understanding also.*[g] *I will sing* the praises of God *with the spirit; but I will sing* them *with understanding also*, and will take great care to mingle no foolish trifling action, unworthy the dignity of a rational creature, with my prayers or songs of praise. And it becomes you especially to consider this, who are so proud of your own wisdom, and yet in some respects act so foolish a part.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

f *Understanding, unfruitful* to others.] This I think a more natural interpretation than that which supposes the apostle to suggest a thought, which the Papists urge to palliate the absurdity of *prayers in an unknown tongue*, namely, "there "may be some general good affections "working, where the person praying "does not particularly understand what "he says." But this would make it almost impossible to conceive, how the *gift of tongues* could be abused, if the person exercising it was under such an extraordinary impulse of the spirit, as to utter sensible words, which he did not himself understand; in which case a man must be, in the most extraordinary sense that can be conceived, the *mere Organ* of the *Holy Ghost* himself.

g *Pray with understanding.*] Mr. Locke, and most other commentators, seem here to have lost the sense and high spirit of the apostle in this clause, when they explain τῳ νοι, as if it merely signified *a manner intelligible to others.* I apprehend, it is designed farther to intimate, what a want of *manly* sense and *right* understanding it must betray, to talk in a language the hearers could not take in, how sublime soever the discourse might be. This the 20th verse, and especially the use of τελειοι there, strongly suggests.

SECT. XXVI.

I Cor. XIV. 16

Moreover, whoever thou art, who actest in this ostentatious manner, consider a little, for the farther illustration of this argument, the situation of one of thine own hearers. *If thou givest thanks* for instance, *in the spirit,* in the manner that we now suppose it to be done, that is, in an unknown tongue, *how shall he that filleth up a private place;* and should join with thee in thy devotion, *say Amen to thy thanksgiving, seeing he knows not what thou sayest?* You know it is customary for the audience to pronounce their Amen: now it seems a very absurd, not to say, hazardous thing, for people to testify in such a public and solemn manner their consent to, and concurrence with, they know 17 not what. *For* we will grant, that *thou indeed givest thanks well,* and that there is nothing improper either in the sentiments or expressions, if they were understood; *nevertheless, the other is not* at all *edified,* or improved; in order to which it is absolutely necessary, that he should know what is said.

18 For my own part, *I thank my God,* and desire to mention it entirely to the glory of that blessed Being from whom all my gifts and talents are derived, *that I speak with tongues more than you all,* even the whole society taken together, and am distinguished from my other brethren in this endowment, in proportion to the more extensive commission which I have received to bring a variety of nations to the knowledge of the gospel, and persuade them to em- 19 brace it. *But in a* Christian *church,* when assembled with them for the purposes of public devotion, *I had rather speak five* plain *words with my understanding,* in a rational manner, *that I might teach others also,* and promote the edification of those who were joining with me, *than ten thousand* of the most pompous and elegant *words in an [unknown] tongue,* though uttered with the greatest readiness, and expressing conceptions ever so excellent; yet I had rather be entirely silent in an assembly, than take up their time, and prostitute the extraordinary gifts of God, to such vain and foolish purposes. And I heartily wish I may be able to bring you to the same reasonable way of think-

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue.

ing; which would be much to the credit of your own understanding, as well as of your Christian profession. SECT. XXVI.

IMPROVEMENT.

HOW weak and poor a thing is pride and ostentation, and how wise and honourable, charity and humility! Who, that has a right discernment, would not rather have been the obscurest Christian, that now, almost unseen, joins our assemblies, and in heart at least, humbly puts his amen to the petitions presented there, than the most fluent talker at Corinth; abusing the special gifts of the Spirit, and trifling away, in an unseasonable display of his own, then unprofitable, endowments, the precious moments, which were destined to the highest purposes of religious edification? Who must not lament to see pride and vain-glory, so early insinuating themselves into Christian societies! Who must not, from so sad an instance, learn to be greatly watchful over their own hearts, on a side where they are subject to such dangerous attacks! Verse 2-12

Had the most able and zealous Protestant divine endeavoured to expose the absurdity of *praying in an unknown tongue*, as practised in the church of Rome, it is difficult to imagine what he could have written, more fully to the purpose, than the apostle hath here done. And when it is considered, how perversely the Papists retain the usage of such prayers, it will seem no wonder they should keep the scriptures in an unknown tongue too. But they proclaim at the same time, their superstition and idolatry in so universal a language, that even a barbarian might perceive and learn it in their assemblies. Let us pity, and pray for them, that God may give their prejudiced minds a juster and happier turn. And since we see the unreasonable and pernicious humour of immutably adhering to ancient customs, prevailing to maintain in the church of Rome, so flagrant an absurdity, as praying in an unknown tongue, let it teach us to guard against every degree of the like disposition; and not so much consider, what hath been the practice of any church, in which we were educated, or have chosen to worship, as what the reason of things, and the authority of scripture concur to dictate. 13-16

Of this wise and benevolent apostle, let us learn to estimate the value of gifts by their usefulness; and to seek above all things the edification of our brethren; especially if we are providentially called to minister in public. There is perhaps a manner of *speaking in an unknown tongue*, even when the language of our own country is used; a height of composition, an abstruseness of thought, an obscurity of phrase, which common Christians cannot understand. Let not the ministers of the 18, 19 3, 4

SECT. XXVI.

humble Jesus seek *such high things;* but in this important sense of the exhortation *condescend to men of low estate.* If the ignorant may be instructed, if the careless may be convinced, if the vicious may be reformed, if the devotion of our Christian brethren may be excited, their love to each other cherished, and their holy resolutions confirmed, the great ends of Divine ordinances are answered; and that plainness of speech, which may be most likely to promote them, is rather the glory, than reproach, of the Christian orator.

SECT. XXVII.

St. Paul gives proper advices for preventing that abuse of the gift of tongues which he had been reproving in the preceding section. 1 Cor. XIV. 20, *to the end.*

1 CORINTHIANS XIV. 20.

SECT. XXVII. 1 Cor. XIV. 20.

MY *brethren,* permit me to be the happy means of forming you to a more noble and manly way of thinking, with respect to these spiritual gifts which are the occasions of so many unbecoming emulations among you. Do you desire to be distinguished in the church? distinguish yourselves by solid wisdom; and *be not,* as this ostentation of tongues would shew you to be, *children in understanding;*[a] *but in malice* indeed, *be* as much as possible, like *little infants;* have all the gentleness, sweetness, and innocence of their tender age: *but,* as ye have arrived to years of maturity, *in understanding be perfect* [*men;*] for that religion which the gospel hath now taught you, far from impairing any of the natural faculties, rather exalts and improves them, and directs them to the highest and noblest use. 21 To return to the subject we were upon, you know *it is written in the law,* that is, in the Old Testament, (Isa. xxviii. 11, 12, where God had been complaining of the unteachable disposition of the Jews,) " *Surely in*

1 COR. XIV. 20. BRETHREN, be not children in understanding: howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

21 In the law it is written, With *men of*

[a] *Children in understanding.*] This is an admirable stroke of true oratory, adapted to strike and bring down the height of their spirits, by representing those things in which they were most ready to pride themselves, as comparatively childish.—The word νηπιαζετε refers to *infants,* and is not sufficiently expressed by the word *children,* for they are sometimes vain and sometimes malicious too.—Τελειοι signifies *full grown men;* intimating it was a kind of *boyishness,* if I may be allowed to use that word, to emulate and quarrel with one another.

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1 Cor. XIV. 21

other tongues and other lips, will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.

22 Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say, that ye are mad?

24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

25 And thus are the secrets of his heart made mani-

"*foreign language*,[b] *and with foreign lips I will speak unto this people; and even so they will not hear me, saith the Lord*:" which may be considered and interpreted as an intimation of the purpose God had of sending one last message to them, by his servants endued with the gift of tongues. 22 *So that*, according to this intimation, *tongues are a sign not to believers, but to infidels*. The gift was intended to propagate the gospel among those who were strangers to it, not to edify those that had already believed. *Whereas*, on the contrary, *prophecy* [*is*] designed, *not for infidels, but believers*, to edify churches already gathered; in which respect it is nobler, and more worthy your pursuit. 23 But as there is a manner of using this gift of tongues, which would even pervert the original end for which it was given, and obstruct rather than promote, the conversion of infidels, I must observe, *therefore*, that *if the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with* a variety of unknown *tongues, and any* of the *uninstructed, or*, in other words, the *infidels come in*, when they hear such a confused jargon as this must be, *will they not* presently *say that you are distracted*, and adopt the censure which was at first so rashly passed in the day of Pentecost, that these men are full of new wine? (Acts ii. 13.) 24 *Whereas if all prophesy, and an infidel or ignorant man*, (for I esteem every one ignorant, who is uninstructed in the great mysteries of the gospel, whatever else he may know,) *comes in, he is convicted by all* who thus speak; *he is judged by all*; every one says something to which his conscience bears witness: 25 *And so the secrets of his heart are made manifest*,[c] in a manner to

[b] *In foreign language*, &c.] Most critics, refer these words, as they stand in Isaiah, to the Babylonians, who should come and speak to the Jews in a language unintelligible to them; in which sense the phrase is used elsewhere, Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. v. 15. Diodati thinks the meaning is, "Because they would not attend "to plain messages, God would speak "to them by such as they could not "understand:" and then the apostle's argument will be, "Since God threatens "this as a curse, do not voluntarily bring "it upon the church, merely to make "ostentation of your own gifts." But perhaps the apostle in this application intends to give us the true, though not most obvious interpretation of the words.

[c] *Secrets of his heart are made manifest.*] It is very possible, that, (as in the known cases of Nathaniel, and the woman of Samaria, John i. 47; chap. iv. 18.) some secret facts, relating to a stranger, might in some instances be revealed to the pro

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1 Cor. XIV. 25

him very surprising and unaccountable; insomuch, that sometimes a person who comes into your assembly out of mere curiosity, or possibly with some ill design, is not able to command himself under the impression which the word of God thus spoken makes upon him; *and so*, under the power of it, *falling down upon* [*his*] *face*, *he will worship* that one living and true *God* whom you adore; *declaring*, *that* this ever-blessed *God is indeed among you*: and perhaps, immediately professing on that account, his resolution of joining himself to you; and proclaiming afterwards wherever he comes, in what an extraordinary manner he has met with the Divine presence, and what a wonderful impression hath been made upon his mind. Now surely, that degree of honour which is brought to God and his gospel by one such effect of prophesying, should appear far more desirable to you than any applause or admiration which you can receive from your fellow-Christians by the exercise of your most splendid gifts.

fest: and so falling down on *his* face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

26 I might also urge upon this head, the great disorder which is introduced into your assemblies, by this ostentatious manner of proceeding; for indeed, if you think seriously, *what a* shocking *thing is it*, my *brethren*, *that when you come together* for the purposes of social worship, in which all hearts should unite, each of you is desirous himself to officiate publicly, in such a manner as best suits his present inclination, without any regard to decency and order? *Every one of you hath a psalm* to read, *hath a doctrine* to inculcate, *hath a tongue* in which to preach or pray, *hath a revelation* of some mystery to produce, *hath an interpretation*, which perhaps he immediately begins, while the person, from whom he is to interpret, hath but begun to speak, and thus five or six,[d] if not more, may

26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpreta-

phet; perhaps the ill designs which had brought them into the assembly, when they came only as spies: and this was well suited to the purpose of producing strong convictions of the presence of God with Christians. But I chose to paraphrase the words in such a manner, as to include any remarkable correspondence between what was spoken, and the thoughts and state of the mind which such a stranger might be conscious of. Many memorable instances of which still happen, where ministers preach in an experimental manner; and lasting effects have often been produced, in consequence of such impressions.

[d] Five or six, &c.] Five such cases are mentioned. It seems probable, that

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1 Cor. XV. 26.

tion. Let all things be done to edifying.

be speaking at the same time: in consequence of which no one can be distinctly heard, and the assembly degenerates into a kind of tumultuous riot. I beseech you, my friends, to rectify this, and to proceed upon the general canon, which I would recommend to you upon all such occasions, *let all things be done*, not for ostentation, but *for edification*[e], in such a manner as you do in your consciences believe will be most like to do good to the souls of men, and to build up the church of Christ.

27 If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and that by course; and let one interpret.

28 But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let

27 And in particular, *if any* should *speak with an* [*unknown*] *tongue*, [*let it be*] *by two, or at most* [*by*] *three* in one meeting, *and* that *by course*: *and let* some *one* present still *interpret* what is said[f]. 28 *But if there be not an interpreter, let him be silent in the church*[g], where he can do no

some of these Christians were so full of themselves, and so desirous of exercising their respective gifts, that without waiting for the permission and direction of him who presided in the assembly, (which in the synagogues the apostles themselves seem to have done, compare Acts xiii. 15,) several began speaking, or singing, in the same minute, and some began while others were speaking. The manner in which discourses were carried on in the schools of the philosophers, where several knots of disputants seem so to have been engaged at the same time, and what happened in Jewish synagogues after worship was concluded, might possibly have given some occasion to an irregularity which to us seems so shocking.

[e] *Done for edification.*] I must presume to say, that it appears probable to me, that had one officer been appointed, as a representative of the apostle, to whose direction the society would in conscience have been obliged in all indifferent matters to submit, some hint would have been given of it, amidst the many opportunities which the state of this Corinthian church especially, gave both to St. Paul, and afterwards to Clemens Romanus.

[f] *Let one interpret.*] In this method it is evident, that any discourse thus delivered, would take up more than twice the time in which it might have been delivered had it first been spoken in a known tongue.

[g] *If there be no interpreter, let him be silent.*] Dr. Whitby thinks this was only enjoined to avoid the ostentation of a man's speaking first in an unknown tongue, and then acting as his own interpreter; but I think it evident, from this text, compared with verse 13, that a man might have the *gift* of speaking with tongues, who *could not interpret*; and the great difficulty is to say, how this could happen, and yet the thing wanting not be *another tongue*; which the distinction between *the gift of tongues*, and the *interpretation of tongues*, seems to demonstrate that it was not. I can only offer a conjecture here, which it becomes me to do with the greater modesty, as I think it is a pretty singular one; (as indeed the difficulty itself, great as it is, has seldom been stated by commentators.) The miracle, which conferred the gift of tongues, seems to have been the instantaneous impressing on the mind the familiar and perfect knowledge of a language with which the person was before unacquainted; yet so, that from that time the person receiving it should be able, without any new miracle, to use it as he thought fit, and this, as Dr. Leland well observes, is the only hypothesis on which the abuse of this gift can be accounted for. (See Leland against Morgan, Vol. I. chap. xiii. p. 375.) But I apprehend, that though every man using this gift, and understanding what he said, must have been able to have rendered his discourse sentence by sentence, into his native language, he might be unable to render it into a third, which might be that of many present. Now in such a circumstance, the *gift of interpretation* might take place, if it consisted, as I conjecture it did, in

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manner of service by uttering what none but himself can understand: *and let him speak to himself, and to God:* let him make use of this language in his own private devotions, if he has a mind by exercise to keep up his readiness in it: but let him not produce it so unreasonably as 29 in the present case. And as for those prophesyings, which we chiefly speak of, when scriptures are explained; *let* only *two or three of the prophets speak* in one assembly; *and let the rest judge*, and compare one doctrine with ano-30 ther for the farther improvement of all. *But if* while the discourse continues, [*any thing*] *be revealed to another that sitteth by, let* him not immediately arise, and interrupt *the first;* but let him sit still, till he *have done speaking*[h].
31 *For* by this means *ye may all*, who are thus furnished for it, *prophesy one by one, that* your instruction and consolation may not be thrown away, which would be the case, if many were speaking at once; but *all may learn, and all may* 32 *be comforted.* And there is no impossibility of doing this; *for* the Spirit of God that inspires you, is not a wild irresistible impulse, like that, by which the Pythian priestess, and others who profess inspiration and prophesy among the Gentiles, pretend to be agitated; but *the spirits*, or inspirations, *of the* Christian *prophets* produce those calm emotions which *are subject to the prophets:* they leave a man master of himself, so that he can moderate his passions, and wait the most convenient time and manner of utter-33 ing his oracles. *For God is not* [*the*] [*author*] *of* disorder and *confusion, but of peace* and regu-

him speak to himself, and to God.

29 Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

30 If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

31 For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.

33 For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as

an instantaneous capacity of understanding a strange language, just for that time, and rendering what was spoken in it, into the native tongue of the interpreter. (Compare the paraphrase on chap. xii. verse 10.) On this hypothesis, and truly I think on this alone, one, who had the gift of interpretation, might not be able to speak any foreign language at all; and he who had the gift of a tongue, might not in some circumstance be able to interpret to those who were then his hearers. In this case, the *gift of interpretation*, enabling a man only to act a secondary part, would be less splendid; but whenever it was exercised, it would always argue the person under an immediate agency of the Spirit, and conduce to his usefulness.

h *Let the first have done speaking.*] So I think σιγάτω must here be rendered; for if the direction had been, "Let him "that was speaking immediately hold "his peace, as soon as another intimates "that he has a revelation;" it would introduce a confusion, which this advice was intended to prevent; and I think such an interpretation equally inconsistent with reason, and the connection of the place. Compare verse 32, 33.

in all churches of the saints.

larity; and this orderly method of proceeding, I the rather urge upon you, *as* it is practised *in all the* other *churches of the saints;* and I should be sorry, that you, my Corinthian friends should be remarkable for the irregularity of your proceedings, when God hath been pleased so graciously to distinguish you by such a variety of gifts, and the flourishing state of your society.

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1 Cor. XIV. 33

34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law.

34 *Let your women be silent in* your religious *assemblies,* if they have not some extraordinary revelation; *for it is not* commonly *permitted to them to speak* on such public occasions, *but* it is their duty *to be in subjection* to the superior authority of the man: *as the law also says,* in recording that early sentence on Eve and her daughters for the first transgression, (Gen. iii. 16.) To him shall be thy desire subjected, and he shall rule over thee.

35 And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church.

35 *And if they have a mind to learn* the meaning of *any thing* which they cannot well understand, *let them ask their own husbands at home,* as they may more conveniently and freely talk with them, without any appearance of ostentation, or suspicion of any other ill principles: but let them not break in upon the assembly with questions; *for it is* evidently an *indecent* thing *for a woman to speak in the church,*[i] and suits very ill with that modesty and reserve which is so universally esteemed an ornament to the sex.

36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

36 I know the present custom among you is contrary to some of these regulations, and perhaps some opposition may be made to them: but permit me to ask, *Did the word of God* indeed *come out from you?*[k] Are you the first church in the world, by whose example all others should be modelled? *Or did it reach to you alone?* Are you

[i] *A woman to speak,* &c.] There is an apparent difficulty in reconciling this with chap. xi. 5. 13, in which the apostle seems to grant a liberty, which he here denies. Besides the solution suggested in the paraphrase on verse 34, some have thought, he intended in the former passage, only to say, how women should speak, if they spoke at all; but here absolutely to *prohibit* their doing it: but I cannot think he would debate and adjust the circumstances of doing an unlawful action. Taking this prohibition to be universal, I should suppose with Dr. Whitby, that *prophesying* in the foregoing place, signified *singing psalms* and *praying,* not leading the devotions, but *joining with others in prayer.*

[k] *Did the word,* &c.] That *scepticism, whether did the word of God come forth from you alone,* would be the exactest version of η αφ' ὑμων, &c.

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1 Cor. XIV. 36

the last, and the only Christian society, that you should take upon you to act in so singular a manner? The gospel came from Jerusalem, it is going all over the world, and therefore I must admonish you to behave with such a modest respect to others as becomes those who know yourself to be but a very small part of that noble and extensive body.

37 And *if any of you appear to be a prophet, or spiritual* [*person*] endowed with extraordinary gifts above his brethren, *let him* prove that he is indeed under the influence of the Divine Spirit, by his submission and obedience to these determinations; for he must necessarily *acknowledge, that the things which I* now *write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord,* dictated by inspiration from him, and not the private conception of my own mind.

> 37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you, are the commandments of the Lord.

38 *But if any one is,* or affects to appear, *ignorant,* or uncertain about it, *let him be ignorant:*[l] if he pretend not to own these decisions, I shall not enter into any debate with him; let him stand by the consequence of his ignorance, whether real or affected. But I am confident, that most of you have received proofs of my mission, too convincing to be shaken by any petulant opposition which may arise against it.

> 38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

39 *Therefore* my *brethren,* to conclude this long discourse, and to sum up the point in a few words, *desire* chiefly *to prophesy,* and *yet forbid not* those who are willing to do it under such regulations as I have advanced, *to speak with tongues;* for it is a noble endowment, which I would encourage none to slight or neglect.

> 39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

40 But especially remember this great comprehensive rule, to be applied to a thousand varieties which may arise, *Let all things be done decently,*[m] *and according to order:* let all be conducted in a

> 40 Let all things be done decently, and in order.

[l] *Let him be ignorant.*] Dr. Whitby would render *αγνοειτω, let him not be acknowledged to be a true prophet;* but that is changing the interpretation of the word in a manner one would not choose to admit without greater necessity.

[m] *Decently,* &c.] It must be by a mere accommodation, that this expression can be applied to ceremonies, which may be decent or indecent, according to different circumstances attending them. In the sense given in the paraphrase, the words are used by the philosopher, when he exhorts men to consider the exact order and regular motions of the heavenly bodies, that they may thereby learn το ευσχημον και το τεταγμενον, *what is decent and orderly.* Whichcot's Sel. Serm. p. 177, Edin. Edit.

regular manner, to prevent such disturbances, disputes and scandals for the future, as have already arisen in your society, and will proceed to greater evils, if you do not immediately set upon reforming them.

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1 Cor. XIV. 40.

IMPROVEMENT.

How fondly do men flatter themselves with empty appearances! And often, how justly do those deserve the imputation of childish folly, the height of whose temper will least allow them to bear it! Let us dare to examine ourselves impartially, and be concerned that we may not *be children in understanding*: but forming our minds on the maxims of scripture, and our lives on the example of Christ, may we grow up in him *to the measure of the stature of a perfect man*. But let us be *children in malice*: let us endeavour to be as free from every gloomy, malignant, selfish passion, as *new born infants* are. Who can say he has fully attained this happy and amiable character? Yet let us follow after it, remembering, that there is a sense, in which, (proud and interested, envious and malignant, as alas! we too much are,) we must become *as little children, or we cannot inherit the kingdom of God*.

Verse 20

Those extraordinary gifts, which suited the first planting of Christianity in the world, are now ceased; but let us bless God, they were ever given: and that we have such an incontestable evidence of the truth of the gospel as this chapter affords. Such endowments must certainly argue a Divine power, setting its seal to the gospel; and the reality of such endowments can never be questioned, when we reflect on the manner in which the apostle here reproves the abuse of them: and that in a society where so many were alienated from him and his ministry; and consequently, where such appeals, if not founded on the strictest and most apparent truth, must have exposed him to a contempt never to have been removed.

These miraculous gifts, having abundantly answered their end, are wisely withdrawn; yet still the Divine presence is with the church; of which we have this happy proof, that there are those, who find *the secrets of their hearts made manifest*, by the faithful and skilful administration of Christian ordinances: so that if they do not publicly *fall down upon their faces*, in such extraordinary transports, they inwardly adore the Lord God in their hearts, and acknowledge *that he is with his church of a truth*. May instances of this kind be more frequent, and may the spirituality and fervour with which Divine ordinances shall be administered, be such as may afford more reason to expect them!

24-25.

Let us regard God, *as the author, not of confusion, but of*

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peace; making it our concern to behave in his sanctuary, in a manner agreeable to this view; with such solemn decorum, and with such a tender regard to the edification and comfort of each other, as he may approve. May the God of peace deliver Christians, of every sect, and rank, from that spiritual pride which has thrown many religious societies into great disorder. And, to advance a state, so happy, as that of humility and love must necessarily be, may what the *apostles have written, be acknowledged* Verse 37 *as the commandments of the Lord;* and Christian worship, and practice, be more regulated by their truly authentic canons; which would render many that have been since devised, relating to indifferent matters, as unnecessary, as some others are burdensome, superstitious, and absurd.

SECT. XXVIII.

The Apostle enters on his discourse concerning the resurrection of the dead; which he introduces with some remarks on the certainty and importance of Christ's resurrection. 1 Cor. XV. 1—11.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 1.

SECT. XXVIII. 1 Cor. XV. 1.

THERE is one topic more that remains to be handled, of those concerning which you write to me; I mean, the great doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; which I perceive some among you begin to doubt; whether seduced by any Jewish teachers of Sadducean principles, or biassed by the vain pretences of heathen philosophers, who would despise it as a mean and unworthy hope[a]. *But I make known unto you, brethren,* and remind you of *the gospel which I* have *preached to you* at the very beginning of my ministry among you; *which ye have also received* with readiness and delight, *and in which ye* may be said to *stand,* as much of your establishment in Christianity will depend on your

1 COR. XV. 1. MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein ye stand;

[a] Unworthy hope.] It is well known, that the primitive Christians were often insulted by the heathen philosophers, for their hope of a resurrection; which one of them, ridiculously enough, calls the hope of worms. Compare 2 Tim. xi. 18, and the note there. Others taught virtue to be its own necessary reward, in such a manner as tended to overthrow the strongest of all natural arguments for a future state; I mean, that taken from such an unequal distribution of rewards and punishments, as could not otherwise take place under the government of a righteous God. If Christians were by this tempted so to refine on the doctrine of the resurrection, as in effect to explain it away, it shews the propriety of the apostle's setting himself to prove the resurrection of Christians, rather than a resurrection in general.

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1 Cor. XV. 2.

retaining it in its genuine simplicity and purity:

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

By which gospel *also*, whereof the doctrine of the resurrection makes so considerable a part, *ye are* happily brought into the way of being completely and eternally *saved, if ye* faithfully *retain*[b] *those joyful tidings which I delivered unto you; unless indeed*[c] *ye have believed in vain:* which will certainly be the case, if ye let go that great anchor of your soul which must support it in the fierce storms and tempests to which you will here be exposed.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures:

3 *For I delivered to you among the first* [*principles*] which I inculcated, when I came to preach the gospel among you, *what I have also received*,[d] and been taught by Divine inspiration, *that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures* of the Old Testament, in which he was foretold, and represented, as the great Sin-offering; (Isa. liii. 6, 12; Dan. ix. 26.)

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures:

4 *And* I also instructed you, *that he was buried* in a new tomb; *and that* his dead body was kept by a guard of his enemies: but kept in vain, for to their confusion, and the perpetual establishment of the faith and hope of his humble followers, *he was raised the third day, according to the scriptures*,[e] which intimate, that he should not see corruption in the grave. (Psal. xvi. 10.)

5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.

5 *And* in confirmation of this great truth, I told you, *that* the same day that he rose, *he was seen* first *of Cephas*, or Peter, to whom, that he might comfort his wounded heart under its sorrows for his late fall, he condescended to make his first appearance, excepting that to the women at the sepulchre; and

[b] *Retain.*] So κατέχετε evidently signifies. *To keep in memory* suggests a very inadequate sense.

[c] *Unless indeed.*] Εκτος ει μη is a very remarkable form of expression. Perhaps there may be more in it than most readers are aware. If I mistake not, it suggests the thought expressed, verse 17. So the two first verses may be a transition; as if he had said, I preach the *same gospel* still, and I hope you will retain it; yet I have reason to fear some of you entertain notions which tend quite to enervate it.

[d] *Received.*] For the import of this phrase, see Gal. i. 12; 1 Cor. xi. 23.

[e] *Raised the third day, according to the scriptures.*] It has been queried, where the scriptures foretell, that Christ should rise from the dead on the third day. Some think there is a transposition, or parenthesis, so that the meaning will be, he rose again, according to the scriptures; and this on the third day. Chand. of Christianity, p. 370; and so Dr. Bullock replies, that he would have risen according to the scriptures, had it been on the fifth or tenth day. (Bull. Vind. p. 48.) But Mr. Jefferies, whom I follow in the paraphrase, gives what appeared to me the best solution, as it is intimated, John xi. 39, that bodies began to corrupt on the fourth day. See Jeff. Review, p. 127.

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afterwards he was seen *by* that company who were called *the twelve*[f] apostles, though several of the number were then absent. *Afterwards he appeared* according to his repeated appointments, *to above five hundred brethren at once*[g] in Galilee, where he gave the most glorious and incontestible proof of the reality of his resurrection in the presence of this great concourse, *of whom the greater part continue* [*alive*] *until now*, and constitute a cloud of witnesses to this important truth; *but some are fallen asleep* in Jesus, and gone to dwell with him, as the great Lord of life.

1 Cor. XV. 6.

6 After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once: of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 And you may remember, I told you also, that *after this he was seen of James*, and *afterwards*, just before his ascension, *by all the apostles*.[h]

7 After, that, he was seen of James: then of all the apostles.

8 *But last of all he also appeared to me, as to* an embryo, or *one born out of due time*, a poor, weak, contemptible creature, from whom nothing good was to be expected, not worthy of the least patience; how much less worthy of being marked out with such distinguishing favours!

8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

9 *For* I must humbly acknowledge, and I would

9 For I am the

[f] *Of the twelve.*] It is certain neither Judas nor Thomas were there; and as it is observed below, James might probably be absent; but as the council of twenty-three among the Jews might be said to be assembled, if the greater part were present, though the number might not be complete; so the company might be called the *twelve*, though we should suppose the fourth part to have been absent. Compare Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 36; John xx. 26.

[g] *Above five hundred.*] Probably it was in Galilee, where there was such a number of disciples; though there were no more than an *hundred and twenty* at Jerusalem, when Matthias was chosen. Dr. Prideaux, Mr. Ditton, and many others, urge this as a glorious proof of the resurrection of Christ. Had it been an imposture, so many false hearts and tongues could never have acted in concert; nor would they all have kept a secret, which remorse, interest, and perhaps often torture, might urge them to divulge, especially as there had been one traitor among the *twelve*, on account of which, had they been conscious of fraud, a general suspicion of each other's secrecy must have arisen. See Prid. Lett. to a Deist, p. 21.

[h] *By all the apostles.*] The change of phrase, from that in the conclusion of the 5th verse, is very remarkable, and as a very learned, candid, and sagacious person, has suggested to me, it very probably intimates, that they who were there called *the twelve*, that is, the greater part of the company who used to be so denominated were not *all* the apostles. On which circumstance this gentleman grounds a very probable conjecture, that James might, by some accident, perhaps illness, or affairs indispensably necessary, be detained from meeting his brethren, both on the day of the resurrection, and that day seventh-night, and likewise at the time when Christ appeared to the *five-hundred*; and that he might, in this respect, be upon a level with them, our Lord appeared to him *alone*, after all the appearances mentioned before. And this account of the matter appears vastly more credible than that which St. Jerome quotes from the gospel of the Nazarenes, that on the death of Christ, James made a vow, that he would neither eat nor drink, till he saw Christ risen from the dead; an event of which the apostles had certainly no expectation.

least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

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continually bear it in my mind, that *I am the least of* all *the apostles, who am not* indeed *worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God;* on which account considering the transports of my savage zeal, I think myself hardly deserving to be numbered amongst the meanest followers of my Divine Master, and less than the least of all saints. (Eph. iii. 8.)

1 Cor. XV. 9.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me, was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me

10 *But by the grace of God I am what I am,* a Christian, an apostle, and not inferior to any of my honoured brethren in that office; *and his grace* [*manifested*] *towards me,* in raising me to so high a dignity, and so happy a state, *was not* displayed *in vain: but I laboured more abundantly than they all,* conscious that I could never do enough to balance the mischief I had formerly committed, or answer the obligations under which such rich and distinguishing mercy laid me. I exerted myself therefore to the utmost in my apostolical work; which should, by the way, shelter me from the contempt which some are ready to throw upon me: *yet,* to speak more properly, it was *not I, but the grace of God that was with me:* God furnished me for the work, he excited me to diligence and zeal in it; to him be the glory of all!

11 Therefore, whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.

11 His grace was the cause of all, and *whether therefore I, or they,* laboured most, and to whomsoever we delivered our message, whether among you, or elsewhere, *so we preach, and so ye believed.* All agree in bearing our testimony to the death and resurrection of Christ, and ye, with all other Christians, have agreed to receive it, as the great foundation of our holy religion.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET it be the daily joy of our hearts, to think how firm that foundation stands, and what various and convincing evidence we have, that as Christ became incarnate, visited this wretched world, and *died for our sins, according to the scriptures;* that as he condescended to go down into the caverns of the grave, and lie there in the cold and silent tomb, humbled in the dust of death; so also, *according to the same scriptures, he was raised again on the third day.* Let us be very thankful, that such convincing proof was given of his resurrection, demonstrated by such infallible tokens, and repeated appearances, to all the apos-

Verse 3

4

SECT. XXVIII. tles; who had every opportunity the most scrupulous doubt could demand, of examining at leisure into its certainty. *More than five hundred persons were witnesses to it at one time;* and witnesses, who survived to many future years to attest this important fact, *that our faith and hope might be in God*: in God, *who quickeneth the dead*, and who by this *resurrection of Jesus his Son, hath begotten us again to a lively hope of an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.* As we have received, so let us stand fast in this doctrine; and remember that our *salvation depends on* our stedfastly *retaining it*, and that we *believe in vain*, and worse than in vain, if we ever, on any considerations, *make shipwreck of faith, and of a good conscience.*

Verse 5, 1, 2

It is a matter of joy and thankfulness, that St. Paul was added to this cloud of witnesses, who attested the resurrection of Jesus: that great apostle in whom the grace of God was so richly magnified; magnified particularly in that humility which he here expresses in so amiable a manner; calling *himself the least of the apostles*, and declaring that he was *unworthy of the name of an apostle*; and amidst all the labours and glories of this eminent station in the church, still keeping in his eyes that madness with which, in the days of his infidelity, he had wasted it. Shall we not all learn of him to say, *By the grace of God I am what I am?* Let us be solicitous, that his grace bestowed upon us be not in vain; and ever bearing in mind the many sins of our unconverted state, and our great unprofitableness *since we have known God, or rather been known of him*, let us labour in our Lord's service with proportionable zeal; and when we have laboured to the utmost, and exerted ourselves with the greatest fidelity and resolution, let us ascribe it to that Divine agency which strengthened us for all, and say again, though some should esteem it a disagreeable tautology, *Not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*

9, 10

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The Apostle shews the necessary connection between the resurrection of Christ, which he had established above, and the resurrection of the dead; and urges the importance of retaining that great fundamental of Christianity; in the series of his argument mentioning the surrender of the mediatorial kingdom which Christ shall make at the consummation of all things. 1 Cor. XV. 12—34.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 12.

YOU have heard, my brethren, something of the convincing evidence which attended this great and important doctrine of Christ's

1 COR. XV. 12.

NOW if Christ be

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preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?

13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

14 And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is* also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain; ye are yet in your sins.

resurrection; *but if Christ is* thus *preached, that he was* assuredly *raised from the dead, how do some among you* presume to *say, that there is no resurrection of the dead?* With what face can any, who allow of Christ's resurrection, pretend to deny the other, whether out of an attachment to Sadducean, or philosophical prejudices? *For* 13 it is certain, that *if there is no resurrection of the dead*, if that doctrine be in the general altogether incredible, then *neither is Christ raised.*[a] *And* this would be a consequence, at once 14 the most false, and the most melancholy, that can be conceived; for *if Christ be not raised, then our preaching*, which pretends to take its authority from a commission after his resurrection, in a view of declaring the certainty of it, [*is*] *vain; and your faith*, founded chiefly upon the testimony which God then bore to him, [*is*] *also vain. Yea, and we* the apostles, notwith- 15 standing all the miraculous evidences we give of the truth of our mission, *are found*, what I am sure you cannot believe we are, *false witnesses of God; because* you know that *we bore* this as our most important and solemn *testimony concerning God, that he raised up Christ, whom* nevertheless *he* indeed *did not raise up, if* the notion of a resurrection in the general be, as they teach, an absurdity, and *the dead rise not at all.* I repeat it again, as a point of the high- 16 est consequence; *for if the dead are not* finally to be *raised, neither is Christ raised: And* what 17 terrible consequences would arise from hence! Surely such as might be sufficient to strike us with horror: for *if Christ be not raised*, all *your faith* in the gospel [*is*] *vain*, and ye are without any salvation: *ye are* in that case *still in your sins*,[b] under the pressure of their unex-

[a] *Neither is Christ raised.*] This argument, on which the apostle dwells in so copious a manner, would appear to be of great moment, whatever the principles were by which the doctrine of the *resurrection* was assaulted. It could not be said, that it was in its own nature *impossible*, which was accomplished in Christ; and it would prove, that the hope of a *resurrection* was not, as the Gentiles represented it, *a mean and sordid hope*, since it was accomplished in the Son of God. Compare verse 1, note [a].

[b] *Still in your sins.*] This plainly shews how necessary it was that there should be something *more than reformation*, which was plainly in fact wrought in order to their being delivered from their sins; even that *atonement*, the sufficiency of which God attested by raising our great *Surety* from the grave.

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piated guilt; for with the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ, that of the efficacy of his atonement is inseparably connected. And *then also* there would be this deplorable consequence farther attending, that *they who sleep in Christ, are perished;* even all deceased Christians, not excepting the most excellent of them, who have died for their religion. They have lost their life and being together, on this supposition, in the cause of one, who if still among the dead, must have been an impostor, and false prophet.

1 Cor. XV. 18.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished.

19 And this scheme, which would represent those that sleep in Christ as perished, would, I am sure, be a very terrible doctrine to us the apostles of Jesus, in such a circumstance as this: for *if* it were *in this life only* that *we have hope in Christ, we,* who are exposed to such a variety of calamities and dangers for his sake, *were of all men* in the world *the most pitiable:*[c] since it is evident, that amidst such evils as these, nothing could comfort and support us, but the hopes of immortality; and we must be at once the vilest, and the most wretched of mankind, if while we make such pretences to them, we were indeed governed by any lower views.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable

20 *But* we will *now* dwell no longer on these melancholy suppositions, for we assuredly know that *Christ is* indeed *risen from the dead;*[d] [*and*]

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the

[c] *Of all men the most pitiable:* ἐλεεινότεροι.] It is quite foreign to the purpose, to argue from this text, as some have done that "if there were no future state, virtue would make men more miserable "than they would otherwise be." It is evident, St. Paul here speaks, not of the case of *good men in general,* if their hopes of future happiness should after all be disappointed; but of the case of the apostles, and other preachers of Christianity, if amidst all their hardships and persecutions, they were not supported by this hope. Destitute of this amidst the extremest sufferings, they must have been perpetually subjected to the upbraidings of their own minds, for sacrificing every view of happiness in this world or another, to advance what they knew to be a pernicious falsehood. Perhaps there never were men on earth so criminal, and so wretched, as they must, on this supposition, have been. See the thought illustrated at large in my Sermons on the Power and Grace of Christ, &c. Serm. ix. p. 259—262.

[d] *Christ is indeed risen, &c.*] It is a great mistake to imagine that the apostle is employed throughout this chapter in *proving the resurrection.* The proof lies in a very little room, chiefly verses 12—19, and almost all the rest of the chapter is taken up in *illustrating, vindicating,* or *applying* it. The proof is indeed very short, but most solid and convincing—that which arose from Christ's resurrection. Now that not only proved a resurrection to be in fact *not impossible,* but which was much more, as it proved him to be a Divine Teacher, it proved the doctrine of a *general* resurrection, which he so expressly *taught.* It was natural for so good a man also, to insist on the sad consequences which would follow with respect to himself and his brethren, from giving up so glorious a hope; and the cordial

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1 Cor. XV. 21.

first-fruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

we are sure, that in this his resurrection, he is *become the first-fruits of them that slept*[e]; so that it is the security of ours. *For as death* [*came*] on the whole human race *by* means of one *man*, who brought mortality on all his posterity as the consequence of that one great offence, *so likewise by* means of another *man* [*cometh*] *the resurrection of the dead;* and our happy relation to him abundantly repairs the damage we sustained by our fatal relation to the former.

22 For as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

22 *For as in Adam all are dead*, and a sentence of inevitable death is come upon us all, as descended from him; *so* we Christians have a joyful persuasion for ourselves, and for our brethren, that, (though we are neither capable of effecting or meriting such a change,) *in Christ* we *all shall also be made alive*.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

23 *But* it was fit that *every one* should be re-animated, raised, and glorified *in his own order:* it was fit that *Christ*, after a very short abode in the grave, should rise as *the first-fruits*, and as such should present himself to God, and use his recovered life in his service; *and they who are Christ's* property, the whole body of those that belong to him, should be raised up a considerable time *afterwards*, and appear as a glorious harvest in full maturity, *at* the important hour of *his coming*, when his voice shall awaken, and his almighty hand restore them.

24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all

24 And *then* [*shall*] *the end* of the world [*be*,] the grand catastrophe of all those wonderful scenes that have held in suspence so many succeeding generations; *when he shall* publicly and solemnly *deliver up the* mediatorial *kingdom to God, even the Father*, by whose commission he has held it, and to whose glory he has always administered it; *when he shall have abolished*[f]

manner in which he speaks of this is a noble internal argument, which I hope many of my readers will feel, though I have been obliged to be less copious in the paraphrase than I could have wished.

[e] *First-fruits of them that slept*] It is without sufficient reason, that Mr. Fleming, (Christ. Vol. i. p. 218,) would render απαρχη *ruler, governor*, or *commander*.—Κεκοιμημενων here is explained by κοιμηθεντες, verse 18, and both must refer to Christians, of whose resurrection alone, and not that of the wicked, he evidently speaks in this whole chapter.

[f] *Abolished* and deposed.] The word καταργειται generally signifies, "divesting a thing of some power, whether lawful or usurped, which it formerly had, and reducing it to an incapacity of exerting that energy any more." Thus it is used of Satan, Heb. ii. 14; of *death* here, and verse 26, and 2 Tim. i.

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1 Cor. XV. 24.

and deposed *all principality, and all authority and power,* that has opposed itself to his government, and shall have triumphed over all the efforts, which either men or devils could ever make against his ever-growing empire and dominion. *For* we know, that according to the tenor of that ancient prophecy, (Psal. cx. 1,) which carries with it so illustrious a reference to the Messiah and his kingdom, *he must reign till he have put all* [*his*] *enemies under his feet;* so as that they should become his footstool, and subserve that exaltation which they have endeavoured to prevent. And so universal shall the triumph be, that *the* very *last enemy,* [*even*] *death, shall be* deposed and *destroyed:* that enemy which continues in some measure to hold the subjects of Christ under its dominion, even when the temptations of the world, and the malice of Satan, can hold them no longer, and when every remainder of corrupt nature and human infirmity has long since ceased in the perfect holiness of the intermediate state, and its unmingled serenity and joy.

rule, and all authority, and power.

25 For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed is death.

27 This, I say, must necessarily be implied: *for it is elsewhere said, he hath put all things under his feet,* (Psal. viii. 6,) and it must accordingly be accomplished; *but* [*it is*] *evident* enough, *that when he saith, that all things were subjected* to him, *it is with the exception of him by whom all things were* thus *subjected to him* None can surely imagine, that the Son was ever to reign over the great and glorious Father of all; but on the contrary it may naturally be concluded, that he would still direct his administration to the glory of him from whom he received his kingdom. *But when* the Father shall have fulfilled this promise in its utmost extent, and *all things shall be subjected to him,* so that it shall appear to every eye, that he is indeed Lord of all; *then shall the Son also himself,* amidst all the glories of that triumph, be, and declare himself to *be, subject to him that subjected all things to him*[g], by public act, in the midst of this most

27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted which did put all things under him.

28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him,

10; of *temporal princes,* 1 Cor. i. 28, chap. ii. 6; and of the *ceremonial law,* Eph. ii. 15.

g *Then shall the Son also himself be subject, &c.*] I hope I shall be forgiven. ...

that God may be all in all.

august assembly, giving up, as it were, his commission to preside as universal Lord in the mediatorial kingdom, to him; as having answered the end for which it was given him, in the complete salvation of all his people, whom he shall then introduce into a state of the greatest nearness to God, and most intimate converse with him; *that God may be*, and that he may appear to be, *all in all;* that they all may enjoy complete and everlasting happiness, in the full communication of the Divine favour to them, for ever, in a world where they shall no longer need a Mediator to introduce them to him.

1 Cor. XV. 28.

29 Else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead,

Such are our views and hopes, as Christians; *else* if it were not so, *what should they do, who are baptized* in token of their embracing the Christian faith *in the room of the dead,*[h] who are just fallen in the cause of Christ, but are yet supported by a succession of new converts, who immediately offer themselves to fill up their places, as ranks of soldiers, that advance to the

29

after the best attention I could use, I have missed the true and exact sense of this most difficult text. It is surprising to find authors of such different sentiments, as Witsius, and Crellius, agreeing to speak of Christ, as returning, at it were, to a *private* station, and being "*as one of* "*his brethren*," when he has thus given up the kingdom. The union of the Divine and human natures in the person of the great Emanuel, the incomparable virtues of his character, the glory of his actions, and the relation he bears to his people, with all the texts which assert the perpetuity of his government, prohibit our imagining that he shall ever cease to be illustriously distinguished from all others, whether men or angels in the heavenly world through eternal ages. To me it appears that, the *kingdom* to be given up, is the *rule of this lower world*, which is then to be consumed; and that it may seem, as if a province of his empire were destroyed, his administration, undertaken in avowed subservience to the scheme of redemption, (Eph. i. 10.) and completed in the resurrection of all his people, shall close in a *decent* and *honourable* manner; God will declare the ends of it fully answered, and the whole body of his people shall be introduced by him into a state of more intimate approach to, and communion with God, than had been known by the spirits of the blessed in their separate state.

h *Who are baptized in the room of the dead.*] It would be almost endless to enumerate, and much more to canvass, all the interpretations which have been given of this obscure and ambiguous phrase, ὑπερ των νεκρων. I think that of Sir Richard Ellys, which I have given in the paraphrase, much preferable to any other. See Fortuita Sacra, p. 137, &c. As for other interpretations, there is no reason to believe, that the superstitious custom, mentioned by Epiphanius, of baptizing a living person, as representing one who had died unbaptized, is here referred to; it is more likely to have risen from a mistake of this passage, than to have been so early prevalent. Mr. Cradock's supposing it to allude to washing dead bodies, neither suits the grammar, nor really makes any significant sense. Nor is there any need of supposing that νεκρων is put for νεκρω and refers to their being baptized into the religion of Jesus, who, on the adversary's hypothesis, is *still dead*. The senses, which Crellius, and bishop Atterbury maintain, differ so little from each other, and that we have given, that it may suffice to say, that each expresses but a part of the sense, and loses something of the spirit which we apprehend in these words.

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1 Cor. XV. 29.

combat in the room of their companions, who have just been slain in their sight. *If* the doctrine I oppose, be true, and *the dead are not raised at all, why are they nevertheless* thus *baptized in the room of the dead,* as cheerfully ready at the peril of their lives to keep up the cause of Jesus in the world?

30 *And* indeed, how could my conduct be accounted for in any other light, but by supposing, that we act with a steady and governing view to this great principle, and this glorious hope? *Why* otherwise *are we every hour exposed to* so much *danger,* in the service of a Master from whom it is evident we have no secular rewards to expect?

31 Yet, my brethren, *I* do upon this solemn occasion *protest,* and even swear *to you,* by the greatest of all asseverations, by our hopes and our joys as Christians, *by our rejoicing*[i] and confidence common to us all, and *which I* with you *have in Christ Jesus our Lord;* I protest, I say, by this, that *I daily die;* that is, that I am every day surrounded, as it were, with death in its most terrible forms, and bear so many evils, that every hour of my life seems a new martyrdom.

32 One great instance of this has so lately happened, that I cannot forbear mentioning it. *If* to speak *after the manner of men,* or to use a common proverbial phrase, *I have,* like a slave exposed upon a public theatre, *fought with* wild *beasts at Ephesus,*[k] having been

if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?

31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus,

[i] *Our rejoicing.*] Our received copies read it, ὑμετέραν, *your rejoicing;* but the reading which I follow, seems so much more natural and easy, that one can scarce forbear believing it authentic. Yet it may be interpreted into a very pertinent sense, "I protest by *your* joys, "which I do so cordially take part in, "that I may call them my own."

[k] *Fought with wild beasts at Ephesus.*] The stories which Nicephoris, (lib. II. cap. 25.) and Theodoret give us, of an encounter which St. Paul had with *wild beasts* on the theatre at Ephesus, (see Witsii Mel. Vit. Paul. cap. viii. sect. 23, &c.) have been so far regarded by Dr. Whitby, that he contends for the literal interpretation of this passage; in favour of which it is also urged, that had he spoken of *brutal men,* he would rather have mentioned the assaults that were made upon him at Lystra, where he was stoned, and supposed to be dead. But the danger of being pulled to pieces might be greater at Ephesus; it had happened very lately, and as the scene was much nearer Corinth, it might be more natural for him to mention it here. The silence of St. Luke in his history, as to so memorable an event, as a combat with *beasts* would have been, and St. Paul's omitting it in the large catalogue of his sufferings, (2 Cor. xi. 23.) together with his known privilege as a Roman citizen, which would probably, as to be sure it should legally, have protected him from such an insult, do all, (as Mr. Cradock, and others have observed,) favour the figurative interpretation. And the expression κατὰ ἄνθρωπον, *after the manner of men,* or *humanly speaking,* has a propriety on this hypothesis, which it cannot have on the other, and seems to be quite decisive.

what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

assaulted with the most savage fury by a tumultuous multitude there, *what advantage have I* gained by such a combat, if my hopes may not be allowed to open into immortality? On the contrary, *if the dead rise not* at all, the Epicurean maxim might seem to be justified, "Let us "make the best of this short life, which is the "whole period of our being; and giving up "those sublime sentiments and pursuits which "belong not to creatures of so short and low an "existence, *let us eat and drink, since we* are to "*die*, as it were, *to-morrow*,[l] or the next day: "for so little is the difference between one period "of such a life, and another, that it is scarce "worth while to make the distinction."

33 Be not deceived: Evil communications corrupt good manners.

33 *Be not deceived*, brethren, but be upon your guard against such pernicious maxims and reasonings as these; and if you value either faith, or a good conscience, do not converse familiarly with those that teach them; for, as the poet Menander well expresses it, *Good manners are debauched by talk profane.*[m]

34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

34 *Awake*, therefore, *as becomes righteous* and good *men*,[n] from the intoxications of such wild and delusive dreams as these; *and sin not* in supporting or countenancing doctrines, so subversive of the Christian faith and hope; *for some are* still *ignorant of God*, and with the abused light of Christianity know less of him than well-improved reason might teach them. *I say this to your shame*, considering how much you boast of your knowledge,

[l] *Let us eat, &c.*] This is the great argument urged to prove, that by the resurrection of the dead St. Paul means a *future state.* But the true solution seems to be, that he writes all along upon a supposition, that if such proof as he had produced of Christ's resurrection, were not to be depended upon, we could have no certainty at all with respect to *any future* existence. And I must declare, that it seems to me, that the natural arguments of the immortality of the soul, and future retributions, do appear to carry with them great probability, notwithstanding all that Mr. Hallet has offered to invalidate them. Yet the degree of evidence is by no means comparable to that which, admitting the truths of the facts alledged, the Corinthians must have had of Christ's resurrection, with which ours has so necessary a connection. And consequently, had these proofs been given up, what might have been pleaded in favour of the other, would probably have made very little impression.

[m] *Good manners are debauched.*] The original words of Menander are an iambic verse, I chose therefore to translate them thus, and it is very agreeable to the Greek, in this connection, which seems to determine ὁμιλίαι κακαί to *profane discourses.*

[n] *Awake, as becomes righteous men.*] As some read for δικαίως, δίκαιοι, which gives rather a more forcible sense, I chose this rendering, which is a kind of medium between the two readings.

SECT. XXIX. 1 Cor XV. 34. which in this plain and important branch of it, appears so wretchedly deficient; while you cultivate so many vain subtilties, which tend rather to corrupt, than to exalt and perfect your minds.

IMPROVEMENT.

WELL may we rejoice, to see the doctrine of our own resurrection so closely connected in the sacred writings, and especially in this excellent discourse of St. Paul, with that of our blessed Redeemer; as that they should be declared to stand, or to fall together. *For Christ is assuredly risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep.* He hath repaired, to all his spiritual seed, the damage that Adam brought upon his descendants; yea, he is become to them the author of a far nobler life, than the posterity of Adam lost by him.

Verse 12, 16, 20, 21, 23

24, 26 Let us meditate with unutterable joy on the exaltation of our glorified Head, of our gracious Sovereign, who has conquered death himself, and will make us partakers of his victory. He hath received from his Father, glory, honour, and dominion; and he shall reign till his conquest be universal and complete, and till death be not only stripped of its trophies, but rendered subservient to his triumphs; shall reign, till all his purposes for his Father's glory, and his own, be finally accomplished.

27 But O, who can express the joy and glory of *that day!* when Christ shall *give up the kingdom to the Father*, and present unto him all his faithful subjects, transformed into his own image; a beautiful and splendid church indeed, for ever to be the object of the divine complacence, for ever to dwell in the Divine presence, in a state of the greatest nearness to God, who shall then be all in all. Well may the expectation of this illustrious period cheer the Christian under his greatest extremities, and make him of all men the most happy, when otherwise, on account of his sufferings in the flesh, he might seem *of all men the most miserable.* Well may this *his rejoicing in Christ Jesus*, that sacred oath, which this persecuted and distressed apostle, with so sublime a spirit, here uses, encourage him to go on, though he be daily dying; though he were daily to encounter the most savage of mankind, and death itself in its most dreadful forms. Well may this knowledge of God, of his gracious purposes, and of his exalted Son, *awaken us to righteousness;* well may it deliver us from the bondage of sin.

31, 32, 34

Let us retain these noble principles of doctrine and action, and guard against those evil communications, those sceptical and licentious notions, which would corrupt our spirits, which would enervate every generous spark which the gospel kindles up into a flame, and by bounding our views within the narrow circle of

33

mortal life, would degrade us from the anticipations of angelical felicity, to the pursuits of brutal gratifications.

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The Apostle answers objections against the resurrection, drawn from our not being able to conceive of the particular manner in which it shall be effected; and concludes with urging it, as a noble incentive to the greatest steadiness and zeal in religion. 1 Cor. XV. 35, *to the end.*

1 COR. XV. 35. BUT some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 35.

SECT. XXX. 1 Cor. XV. 35.

I HAVE thus endeavoured to confirm your faith, and establish your hope, in the great and glorious doctrine of a resurrection; *but some one will perhaps* be ready petulantly to object, and *say, How are the dead raised up,* when their bodies are quite dissolved, and the particles of which they consisted, scattered abroad, and perhaps become parts of other bodies? *and* if they are raised, *with what* [*kind of*] *bodies do they come* out of their graves, and what alteration is made in their constitution and organization, to fit them for a future life, in so many respects different from this?

36 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.

36 *Thou thoughtless creature,* who perhaps pridest thyself in the sagacity of this objection, as if it were some mighty effort of penetration, how easily mightest thou find an answer to it from what passes every day in the works of nature? *That seed which thou sowest* in thy field, *is not quickened* to new life and verdure, *except it* appear to *die*[a]: before it springs up to the future vegetable, whatever it be, it is macerated, decayed, and at length consumed in the earth.

37 And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other *grain*:

37 *And* [*as for*] *that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body which shall be* produced from that seed which is committed to the ground, *but bare grain, perhaps of wheat, or of any other* kind of [*grain*], in which there is no appearance of root,

[a] *Except it die.*] To this it hath been objected, "that if the seed die, it never "bears fruit." But it is certain, that the seed in general does consume away in the ground, though a little *germen*, or bud, which makes a part of it, springs up into new life, and is fed by the death and corruption of the rest. So that these wise philosophers of our own, talk just as foolishly as the *Corinthian free-thinkers*, whom they vindicate. See John xii. 24

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1 Cor. XV. 38.

or of stalk, of blade, or of ear. *But God*, in the course of his natural operations, by certain laws of vegetation, with which thou art entirely unacquainted, *gives it a body as he pleases*, and such a variety of parts as he hath thought fit to determine for that particular species, *and to each of the seeds its own* proper *body*[b]: not only a body of the same sort, but that which by virtue of some connection it had with this or that individual grain, may properly be called its own, though in its form much different, and much more beautiful.

38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39 There is an immense variety in the works of God, even in those which fall under the inspection of our senses, feeble and limited as they are, while we dwell in flesh and blood. *All flesh*, you know, *is not the same* kind of *flesh*, *but the flesh of men, and of cattle*[c], *of fishes, and of fowls, is different each from the other*, in its form, qualities, and manner of being subsisted.

39 All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, *and* another of birds.

40 [*There are*] *also celestial bodies, and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial, and the terrestrial, are* apparently *different*, and the brightest lustre the latter can have, is but a faint reflection of what is received from the former. And even in the glory of the celestial bodies

40 *There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another.

41 there is also a wonderful variety: *There is one* superior and incomparable *glory of the sun*, which often shines with a lustre scarce to be endured; *and another* reflected and milder *glory of the moon; and another glory of the stars*, which as they appear to us, are far inferior to either of the two great luminaries. *And* again, [*one*] *star differeth from* [*another*] *star in glory*[d],

41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from *another* star in glory.

[b] *Its own* proper *body*.] The apostle seems more directly to speak of *that* as its proper body, which is peculiar to that species of grain; yet undoubtedly each ear has a peculiar reference to one individual, as its proper seed, in such a manner, as another of the same species has not; and what follows, plainly suits such a view.—God is said to *give it this body as he pleases*, because we know not how it is produced, and the apostle's leading thought is, "that it is absurd to argue "against a resurrection, on a principle "which is so palpably false, as that must "be, which supposes us to understand "all the process of the Divine works."

[c] *Cattle.*] So κτηνων signifies; but it seems to be put for *beasts* in general.

[d] *And one star differeth*, &c.] It is in the original γαρ, that is, *for*; but I conclude, that particle is here used only as a *copulative*; else we must suppose the apostle to argue more philosophically than he probably intended, and to assert that the sun and moon were *stars*. He plainly speaks of the lustre which these celestial luminaries exhibit to us, not of what they have in themselves, without any regard to their aspects on us.

according to their respective magnitudes, in reference to which they are ranged by astronomers under different classes.

42 So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption:

So [shall be] also the resurrection of the pious *dead*:[e] another kind of glory shall appear, than human nature has known in its purest state, in any beauty of form, or ornaments of dress. There shall indeed, as I intimated but now, be some difference in the degree of that glory, correspondent to the different excellencies in the characters of good men, on whom it is to pass: but all shall experience a most illustrious and happy change; so that it may be said concerning the body of them all in general, *it is sown*, or committed, like seed to the ground, *in corruption*, just ready to putrify, and through various forms of putrefaction to be reduced to the dust: but *it is raised in incorruption*, so that no accident or disorder whatsoever, shall be able to dissolve it again, or to threaten it in the least degree. *It is sown in dishonour*, in a poor contemptible state, and under a kind of infamy, put upon it by the execution of God's first sentence against sin: but *it is raised in glory*,[f] every part and trace of the curse being abolished, and itself being formed in such a manner as to make it appear that the King of heaven delights to honour the happy spirit on which he bestows such a dress. *It is sown in weakness*, absolutely incapable of any, even the lowest degree of action, or sensation, and deprived of those limited abilities which it possessed in this its mortal life: but *it is raised in power*, endowed with almost angelic degrees of strength, vigour and activity. *It is sown an animal body*, formed to the purposes of animal life in this present world: but *it is raised a spiritual body*, formed to a noble superiority to the mean gratifications of this imperfect state, and fitted to be

43 It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power:

44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

[e] *The resurrection of the* pious *dead.*] Of them it is evident the apostle here speaks, and not of the *dead* in general. Compare verses 23, 43, 49, and 57, with 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, and verse 54. St. Paul, (Phil. iii. 11,) and our Lord, (Mat xxii. 30; Luke xx. 35.) mean the *same* thing by the resurrection.

[f] *It is raised in glory.*] Some think this refers to the *garment of light* which the body shall put on at the resurrection, on which Dr. Whitby has a remarkable note here, (compare Mat. xvii. 2; Acts ix. 3; Rev. i. 14, 15; Dan xii. 3; Wisd. iii. 7; Mat. xiii. 43; and Mark ix. 3.) and which he thinks remarkably to illustrate the matter *ex adverso*.

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the instrument of the soul, in the most exalted services of the spiritual and Divine life. For it is certain, that as *there is an animal body*, with which we are now by daily, *and* frequently, by unhappy experience, acquainted; so *there is* also *a spiritual body:* God can exalt and refine matter to a degree of purity and excellence to us unknown; and there are many bodies now existing so pure and active, as that in compa-45rison they may be called spirits. *And so it is written* with respect to the former, (Gen. ii. 7.) that *the first man Adam*, when God had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, *was made a living soul;*[g] so that even in the original state of rectitude and felicity, in which man was created, he was made capable of, and fitted to, an animal life here upon earth: whereas the Lord Jesus Christ, who by virtue of the influence he has upon all his seed, as their spiritual Head, and great federal Representative, may well be called *the* second, or *latter Adam*, [*is*] *for an enlivening spirit*[h] to those who are united to him, and will not only purify their souls by the operation of his Spirit communicated to them, but at last spiritualize their very bodies.

46 *Nevertheless, the spiritual* Adam [*was*] *not first*, *but the animal, and afterward the spiritual;* and as the first Adam existed before Christ was sent to become our Saviour, so must we first wear that animal body which we derive from the one, before we put on that spiritual body which we 47derive from the other. *The first man* [*was*] *from the earth*, and so *earthy:* he was created out of the dust of the earth, and his body was only a mass of animated clay, in reference to

1 Cor. XV. 44. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body,

45 And so it is written. The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit, that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural: and afterward that which is spiritual.

47 The first man *is* of the earth, earthy:

g *Made a living soul.*] This is a quotation from Moses; and there seems to be a peculiar emphasis in the original, which I know not how to preserve in the translation, in the reference of ψυχη to ψυχικον, in the former verse, as distinguished from πνευματικον; and refers to such a difference between ψυχη, the *animal soul*, and πνευμα, the *rational spirit*, as is more clearly expressed, (1 Thess. v. 23.) and is also very agreeable to the import of נפש חיה, the word which Moses uses.

h *An enlivening spirit.*] This is not a quotation from scripture, as some have thought, but what the apostle adds on occasion of the quotation brought above; as if he had said, Christ is the last Adam, as an illustrious antitype of the first, (Rom. v. 14;) and he hath in himself a *spirit*, with which he quickeneth whom he pleases, and in what degree he pleases, John i. 4; and verse 21, 26. The words *living*, and *enlivening*, have such a correspondence to each other, as ζωσαν, and ζωοποιουν. I therefore preferred the latter of them to *quickening*, though the sense be entirely the same.

1 Cor. XV. 47

the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.

which it was said, Dust thou art, (Gen. iii. 19;) *the second man*, of whom we speak, [*is*] *the Lord from heaven:* he came originally from the heavenly world, to which he is returned; and whatever of earth there was in the composition of the body he condescended to wear, it is now completely purified and refined into the most glorious form. And *such as the earthy* [*was, are*] *they also that are earthy:* they all descended from him, and have no higher original, are mean, mortal, corruptible creatures; *and such as the heavenly* [*is, are*] *they also that are heavenly:* they who are, as it were, born of Christ by the regenerating influences of his Spirit, and therefore are to live with him in heaven, shall at last have such glorious bodies as he hath.

48 As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

49 *And* it is delightful beyond all expression, to think of it with self-application, that *as we* in particular *have borne*, and do now bear, *the image of the earthy;* as assuredly as we are now sinful, afflicted, and mortal men, like the first Adam; so surely *shall we also bear the image of the heavenly;* so surely shall we be brought to resemble Christ in purity, glory, and immortality.

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

50 *But* when I spake of bearing the image of the earthy Adam in mortality, I would not be understood as asserting, that every one of the descendants of Adam shall, in fact, go through these pangs of death, and that dissolution in the grave, which Adam has experienced. *This, I say brethren,* I affirm it as a constant and important truth, *that flesh and blood,* such weak and crazy systems of it, as those in which we now lodge, *cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth* a body impregnated with the seeds of *corruption inherit incorruption:* it is utterly unfit for the pure ethereal regions of the blessed, and indeed incapable of subsisting in them.

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

51 This is universally true; yet *behold! I tell you a mystery,* that is, a doctrine hitherto unknown, and which you cannot now be able fully to comprehend: for *we* Christians *shall not all sleep,* shall not all submit to the stroke of death, so that our bodies should all lie mouldering in the grave, which is their general doom; *but we shall all,* the living as well as the dead, at the

SECT. XXV.

1 Cor. XV. 52

appearance of Christ to the final judgment, *be changed* in a most glorious and happy manner into the image of our descending Lord. And this change, great and illustrious as it is, the Divine power shall effect in less time than we have been speaking of it: for it shall pass *in a moment*, in an imperceptible point of time, and even *in the twinkling of an eye*, just *at* the instant when *the last trumpet* is blown by the Divine command, to awaken all the millions of saints who are sleeping in the dust: *for the trumpet shall* then *sound*, the voice of the archangel, and attending celestial legions, shall fill the whole earth and heaven with an astonishing noise, *and the dead shall* immediately, as upon its summons, *be raised incorruptible*, *and we*, that is, those of us Christians who are living, *shall be changed*[i] as Enoch and Elijah were in the day of their translation: that body, which but a moment before appeared just as ours now do, shall, quick as thought, be transformed into an image of that worn by our triumphant Lord, and fitted for all the most active services, and all the purest sensations and delights of the celestial

53 state. *For* in order to that, as I have just observed, *it is necessary, that this corruptible put on incorruption, and* that *this mortal put on immortality*, so as to be no longer subject to dis-

54 eases or death. *But* when this glorious and long expected event shall be accomplished, *when this corruptible* part of our frame *shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, than shall the saying be brought to pass, which is written*, (Isa. xxv. 8,) *Death is swallowed up in victory*, and perfectly subdued and destroyed, and so happy a state introduced, that it would not be known, that death had ever had any place or power among Christ's subjects

55 at all: And in the assured view of this, may the Christian, even now, with the greatest pleasure

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead, shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where

[i] *We*, that is, those of us Christians who are living *shall be changed*.] As the phrase will admit of the looser sense the paraphrase gives, I cannot allow of the argument drawn from hence, to prove, either that the apostle expected he should live till Christ appeared to judgment, or that he should be raised from the dead, and *continue upon earth* some time before that great event happened: Though I confess, the argument which Mr. Fleming draws from hence, in favour of the last of these opinions, is very plausible. Compare 1 Thess. iv. 15.

SECT. XXX.

1 Cor. XV. 55.

is thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

take up his song of triumph; *Where [is] thy* pointed and destructive *sting, O death? Where [is] thy victory, O grave*[k]? How little hurt canst thou do me? For how little a while shalt thou be able to triumph over me?

56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

56 *The* very *sting* and torture *of death*, that which arms it with its greatest terrors, [*is*] the consideration of its being the punishment of *sin*, and consequently its foreboding future misery, as the effect of the Divine displeasure; *and the power of sin*, that which constitutes its malignity, and gives it these killing weapons, [*is*,] that it is a transgression of *the* Divine *law*:

57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

57 *But thanks [be] to God, who* in his infinite mercy hath taken away the sting and terror of death, and *giveth us* the prospects and *the* joys of a complete *victory* over it, by the displays of his pardoning grace, *through our Lord Jesus Christ.* May we ever remain under those grateful impressions that suit so important an obligation!

58 Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

58 *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye fixed* on this as the great foundation of your souls, and *immoveable* in your regards to it, though strongly borne and pressed upon, by a variety of temptations and dangers; be *abounding always in the work of the Lord*, in every service you are capable of performing, which may be acceptable to this your great and compassionate Redeemer; as well *knowing that your labour in the* service of such a *Lord is not*, on the whole, *in vain*; but that whatsoever you may at present suffer for his sake, you shall receive a most glorious reward, in that happy day of the resurrection, concerning which I have been speaking so largely.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 35

Let us learn from this incomparable discourse of the apostle, to curb that vain curiosity which is so ready in matters of

[k] *Where is thy sting,* &c.] The original has a kind of poetical turn, which seems in some measure to suit the sublimity of the sentiment; for the first of the clauses is an *ionick*, and the second, a *trochaick* verse, Πȣ σȣ, Θάνατε, τὸ κέντρον; πȣ σȣ, ᾅδη, τὸ νῖκος; and Mr. Pope has only transposed them to make them, as they stand in our version, the conclusion of one of his stanzas; *O grave where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?* It is generally thought, that these words are borrowed from Hos. xiii. 10, 14, which we render, "*O death I will be thy* "*plague*, &c.;" and some urge that אהי has been read for איהי; but I do not see there is any certain evidence that the apostle intended any quotation at all.

SECT. XXV. Divine revelation, to break out into an unbecoming petulance; and where we are sure, that God declares the thing, let us leave it to him to overcome every difficulty that may seem to attend the manner in which it shall be effected. Nothing may be more useful, in order to the conquering such a weakness, than to observe the operations of God in the works of nature, where *he* Verse 38 *gives to every seed* whether animal or vegetable, *such a body as shall please him.* Each is proper for its sphere, and beautiful in its connection and order, though the *degree of their glory be* different. 39, 40 And thus all the diversity of *glory*, which shall at last be apparent, among the *children of God*, even *the children of the resurrection*, shall serve to illustrate the Divine wisdom, and goodness, and faithfulness.

The alterations made in every instance, will indeed be wonderful, 53 *when this mortal puts on immortality, and this corruptible puts on incorruption* 47, &c. Let us for ever adore the Divine goodness, that when, by our relation to the *first Adam*, we were under a sentence of condemnation and death, he was pleased in his infinite mercy to appoint, that we should stand related to Christ, as the *second Adam*, in so happy a bond, that by him we might recover what we had lost in the former; yea and far more: so 49 that, *as we have borne the image of the earthy, we might as surely bear the image of the heavenly.* O let us earnestly aspire after this blessedness; and remember, that our bearing the image of his holiness, is inseparably connected with the hope of so glorious a privilege!

Let us endeavour, therefore, by cultivating holiness in all its branches, to maintain this hope in all its spirit and energy; longing for that glorious day, when in the utmost extent of the 54 prophetic expression, *Death shall be swallowed up in victory*, and millions of voices, after the long silence of the grave, shall burst 55 out at once into that triumphant song, *O death, where is thy* 56 *sting? O grave, where is thy victory?* And when we see death 57 disarmed, and the terrors of the law silenced, let us bless God for Jesus Christ, by whom the precepts of the law were perfectly fulfilled, and its penalty endured; that so we might not only be delivered from the curse, but called to inherit the blessing. 18, 19 Let it be considered, as an engagement to universal obedience; and in the assurance, that whatever other labours may be frustrat- 58 ed, *those in the Lord shall never be vain*, let gratitude, and interest, concur to render us *stedfast, immoveable, and continually active in his service.*

SECT. XXXI.

The Apostle gives some advices, relating to the proposed collection for the poor saints in Judea. 1 Cor. XVI. 1—12.

1 COR. XVI. 1.

NOW concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

1 CORINTHIANS XVI. 1.

SECT. XXXI. 1 Cor. XVI. 1.

BEFORE I conclude this epistle, I must add a word or two *concerning the collection* which you propose making *for the* poor *saints* which are in Judea, who are in such great straits both on account of the famine and the persecution to which they are exposed. And here I would only say this; *as I have given it in charge to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye* proceed: for nothing occurs to my thoughts at present, which can be more subservient to that generous and good design.

2 Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

2 When you hold your Christian assemblies *on the first day of the week,*[a] in commemoration of the resurrection of our Lord, which has made that day sacred amongst us, *let every one of you lay something by, in proportion to the degree in which* by the Divine blessing, *he hath been prospered* in his affairs; and let him bring it with him to the place where you meet for your public worship; then *treasuring it up*[b] in the common stock, *that so* it may be ready in one sum, and *there be no* necessity of making any particular *collections when I come.* This will save us some trouble, at a time when we shall necessarily have so much important business on our hands; and when a little is added to the stock weekly, it may rise by almost imperceptible degrees, to a greater sum than could perhaps be expected if the whole were to be deposited at once.

3 And when I come, whomsoever you shall approve by *your* letters, them

3 *But when I am arrived* at Corinth, *whomsoever ye shall* appoint and *recommend by* your *letters,* signed by the congregation, or its proper repre-

[a] *On the first day of the week.*] So κατα μιαν σαββατων signifies. Compare Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1; with Mat. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2.

[b] *Treasuring it up:* Εκαστος παρ' εαυτω τιθετω, θησαυριζων.] We render it, *let every one of you lay by him in store.* But the following words shew, that it was to be put into a common stock. The argument drawn from hence for the religious observation of the first day of the week in these primitive churches of Corinth, and Galatia is too obvious to need any farther illustration and yet too important to be passed by in an entire silence.

SECT. XXXI.

1 Cor. XVI. 4.

sentatives; *them will I send, to carry your favour to Jerusalem,* and shall cheerfully intrust them to deliver it with their own hands to the poor Christians there. *And if it be* thought *convenient, that I should also go* up thither myself on this occasion, *they shall go with me;* that every thing may be conducted in the most open and honourable manner, and that your messengers may witness for me, that none of the money has been employed to any purposes whatsoever different from those for which it was given.

will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.

5 This, I hope, will quickly be dispatched; *for I will,* if Providence permit, *come to you, when I have passed through Macedonia; and I am just* 6 *upon my journey through Macedonia;*[c] *And* then *perhaps may continue a while* with you, *and* even *spend the winter among you; that* so, when I have made you as long a visit as my affairs will admit, *you may bring me forward on my journey* to Jerusalem, or *whithersoever* else *I* shall *go,*[d] or through whatever parts I may pass to it; for that is a circumstance about which I am not yet determined, and in which I refer myself to the 7 future direction of Providence. I speak of my coming as at some distance; *for* though from these maritime parts I might easily come to you by sea, and so travel northward, when I have dispatched my business at Corinth; *I will not now see you* in this manner, *in my way; but hope* the little delay which this scheme may occasion, will be made up to your satisfaction: for I fully purpose *to spend some time with you, if the Lord permit;* which the necessities of the churches of Macedonia will not at present give me leave to 8 do. *But I shall continue* here *at Ephesus till* about *pentecost,*[e] reserving the remainder of the

5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: (for I do pass through Macedonia.)

6 And it may be that I will abide; yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.

7 For I will not see you now by the way: but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.

8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until pentecost.

[c] *I am just upon my journey through Macedonia.*] Thus I think, we may justly render, Μακεδονιαν γαρ διερχομαι. Macedonia was not the direct way from Ephesus to Corinth. It seems by his second epistle to the Corinthians, written a few months after this, that he was either in Macedonia, or on his way thither, (compare 2 Cor. i. 16.) from whence it appears that he had a secret purpose of seeing Corinth in his way to, as well as from Macedonia; but he does not express this purpose here, so that we know not how it was signified to them, as from the text last mentioned it seems that it was.

[d] *Whithersoever* else *I go.*] In the fore-cited text, Judea is mentioned; but St. Paul does not seem to have fixed his scheme so particularly, as yet.

[e] *I shall continue at Ephesus till pentecost.*] I look upon this as a very plain intimation, that he was now at Ephesus; and consequently, that the inscription added at the end of this epistle, which

SECT. XXXI.

1 Cor. XVI. 9

9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries.

summer for my tour through Macedonia, and the neighbouring parts. In the mean time, though I have spent so many months here, I am willing to make my stay as long, as with any tolerable convenience I can; *for a great and effectual door* of usefulness *is opened to me* under my apostolical character, in this populous and celebrated city, *and* [*there are*] *many opposers*, who may perhaps take the advantage of my absence, to injure this new-planted church on which I have bestowed so much labour, and for the interest of which I have the tenderest concern.[f]

10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also *do*.

10 *But if*, in the mean time, my beloved friend and brother *Timothy* should *come* to you, *see that he be with you without fear* of any unkind usage, or of any attempt to set him up as the head of a party; as in some instances you have been ready to do by others; *for* as *he* is a man of a very tender and affectionate, so he is likewise of a very candid and humble spirit, and he *laboureth in the work of the Lord* Jesus Christ with great sincerity and zeal; *as I also* [*do:*] and we are in all respects so much in the same sentiments, that I am well assured, the things which would grieve me in your conduct, would be equally disagreeable to him.

11 Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren.

11 And *therefore*, though he be yet but a young man, (1 Tim. iv. 12.) *let no man despise* or make light of *him*; *but* on the contrary, *bring him forward on his journey in peace*, and do all that you can to make it commodious and agreeable to him; *that* so *he may come to me* at Ephesus, as soon as possible: *for I expect him* here *with the* other *brethren*,[g] who are now the companions of his jour-

tells us, *it was written from Philippi*, is very far from being authentic, and I hope it will be remembered, that no credit is to be given to any of these additions, which have been presumptuously made, and I think very imprudently retained.

[f] *A great and effectual door is opened, &c.*] Some think that here is an allusion to the *door of the Circus*, from whence chariots were let out when the races were to begin; and that the word ἀντικείμενοι, which I render *opposers*, signifies the same with *antagonist*, with whom the apostle was *to contend as in a course*. (Acts xix. 20, &c.) This opposition rendered his presence more necessary, to preserve those that were already converted and to increase the number, if God should bless his ministry. Accordingly a celebrated church was planted at Ephesus; and so far as we can learn from the tenor of his epistle to it, there was less to correct and reprove among them, than in most of the other churches to which he wrote.

[g] *I expect him here with the brethren.*] The original words are something ambiguous; but I have taken the sense which seemed most natural. Accordingly I think it probable, that he came to Ephesus before St. Paul was driven out of it by the tumult; and that the apostle be-

SECT. XXXI. ney, and who are all dear to me in the bonds of Christian love.

1 Cor. XVI. 12 But *as for* [*our*] *brother Apollos*, who is so well known to you, and for whom many of you have so high a regard, I am sorry to tell you, that you are not at present to expect a visit from him. *I was* indeed *very importunate with him to come to you with* Timothy, and *the* other *brethren;* as I have an entire confidence, both in his friendship and prudence, and hoped, that whatever improper use has been made of his name in opposition to mine, (compare chap. i. 12, chap. iii. 4—6.) his presence among you might have been useful, just at this crisis. *Nevertheless, he was by no means willing to come now*, lest any advantage should be taken from that circumstance to inflame those divisions he would gladly do his utmost to allay: *but he will come when he shall have a convenient opportunity;* and you may assure yourselves, that he retains a most cordial affection for you, and tender solicitude for your peace and prosperity.

12 As touching *our* brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you, with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient time.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1 LET ministers, from the example of the apostle, learn to be ready to promote charitable *collections for the relief of poor Christians:* and let them frequently exhort their hearers *to do good, and to communicate;* reminding them, that their contributions 2 ought to bear *a proportion to the degree in which God has been pleased to prosper them.*—We see an evident reference to the stated assemblies of the church on the first day of the week in this early age; and it is a proper duty of that day to devise and execute liberal things, according to our respective abilities.

3, 4 The prudent caution of St. Paul, as to the management of pecuniary affairs, is worthy the attention of the ministers of the gospel; and may teach them to take care, not only that they satisfy their own consciences, in the fidelity of their transactions; but also, that they *provide things honest in the sight of all men.* The apostle's courage, in making the opposition he met with at Ephesus, a reason for his continuance there, may instruct us not 8 to study our own ease in the choice of our abode; but rather to

ing obliged to leave that city in so abrupt a manner, desired Timothy to stay a while after him, to settle the affairs of that important church more completely than he had an opportunity of doing it, 1 Tim. i. 3.

prefer those circumstances, however disagreeable in themselves, wherein we may be providentially led to do most, for the advancement of religion in the world.

SECT. XXXI.

His care, that his young friend Timothy might be as easy as possible, constitutes likewise a very amiable part of his character; and suggests, in a manner well worthy of notice, how careful private Christians should be, that they do not terrify and distress the minds of those who are entering on the ministerial office. A faithful disposition to *labour in the work of the Lord,* ought to command respect; yet sometimes, as in the instance of Apollos, even that diligence may be so liable to misrepresentation, that it may be the wisdom of *ministers to absent themselves* from places where they have many to caress and admire them. On the whole, the great business of life is to glorify God, in doing our best for promoting the happiness of mankind; and no self-denial ought to seem hard to us, while we keep that glorious end in view.

Verse 10, 11

12

SECT. XXXII.

The Apostle concludes with some particular salutations, and directions; with general exhortations to courage and love, a solemn benediction to true Christians, and an awful denunciation against those that were destitute of love to Christ. 1 Cor. XVI. 13, *to the end.*

1 COR. XVI. 13.

WATCH ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

14 Let all your

1 CORINTHIANS XVI. 13.

SECT. XXXII.

1 Cor. XVI. 13.

NOW, my brethren, to conclude all, suffer a word of the most affectionate exhortation. Remember the situation in which you are, and with how many formidable enemies you are surrounded, and *be watchful* against all their assaults; *stand fast in the* profession of the Christian *faith; acquit yourselves* not *like* children, but as *men* of knowledge and fortitude: and *be strong* [a] in dependence on the best supports, while you make that your constant care.

14 And that you may not mistake this exhortation, as breathing any thing of a contentious spirit, or fitted only for persons in military life, I would subjoin this necessary caution; *let all your af-*

[a] *Stand fast—acquit yourselves like men, be strong.*] There is no need of seeking a different sense of each word. If there be any difference, ἀνδρίζεσθε may refer to a *strength of resolution;* κραταιοῦσθε, to that *cheerful* and *courageous expectation* of a happy event, which the consciousness of so good a cause would naturally administer.

SECT. XXXII. I Cor. XVI. 14

fairs be transacted in mutual *love*, and under the influence of that noble principle of unfeigned benevolence, which I have been so largely describing and recommending in the former part of this epistle. (See chap. xiii.)

things be done with charity.

15 *And I* farther *beseech you*, my *brethren*, that for as much *as ye know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia*, he, and they, being among the first that were converted to Christianity in all your country, ye pay a proper regard to them; *and* so much the rather, *as they have set themselves* with peculiar resolution and care, according to the rank in which Providence has placed them, and the abilities which God hath given them, *to* the labour and charge of *ministering to the saints*[b].

15 I beseech you brethren (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.)

16 Now I would by all means inculcate it upon you, *that you* should in your respective ranks and circumstances of life, *subject yourselves to such*, *and* not only pay them all due personal regard, but act as you have opportunity, in harmony with them; and that under their influence you should do your utmost for the good of your Christian brethren. And thus I would have you behave *to every associate in that* good *work and labour* in which they are engaged; especially to those who are honoured with the ministerial office.

16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with *us* and laboureth.

17 *I* could not but *rejoice* greatly *at the arrival* and presence *of* that worthy person I have just mentioned, that is *Stephanas and* of *Fortunatus*[c], *and Achaicus*, who accompanied him; *because they filled up your deficiency* with respect to me, and gave me by their converse and friendly offices, that consolation which I might justly have expected from you all, had I enjoyed an opportunity of conversing with you, and about which I could, for your own sakes, wish that some of you had been more solicitous.

17 I am glad of the coming of Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part, they have supplied.

18 *For they refreshed my spirit* greatly by their obliging behaviour, *and* edifying conversation;

18 For they have refreshed my spirit

[b] *They have set themselves*, &c.] This seems to imply that it was the generous care of the whole family to assist their fellow-Christians, so that there was not a member of it which did not do its part.

[c] *Fortunatus.*] This worthy man survived St. Paul a considerable time; for it appears from the epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, (§ 59,) that he was the messenger of the church at Corinth to that of Rome, by whom Clement sent back that invaluable epistle

and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such.

as I doubt not but they have often refreshed *yours* by their ministrations among you. *Therefore* I must again urge it upon you, that you *pay all proper regard to such*, and treat them on every occasion with such respect and affection as so worthy a character well deserves.

SECT. XXXII.

1 Cor. XVI. 18.

19 The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

19 I must now tell you, that *the churches of* the provincial *Asia*, which lie about Ephesus, and with whom I have frequent opportunities of corresponding, *salute you* with all Christian affection; heartily wishing you peace and prosperity. Your good friends, *Aquila and Priscilla*,[d] who have made so long an abode among you, and are now providentially brought hither, *most affectionately salute you in the* bowels of our common *Lord*. And *with* these tokens of respect receive those of *the church in their house*, as you know their family is happy in a large number of Christian members. But I will not

20 All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss.

20 enter into a more particular detail of names; for your society is so celebrated, and esteemed of so great importance to the Christian interest; that I may truly say, that *all the brethren salute you*. Entertain therefore that affection for each other, which those that are almost strangers bear to you, and *salute one another with an holy kiss;* but let it be as cordially sincere as I doubt not but it will be decent.

21 The salutation of *me* Paul, with mine own hand.

21 I have hitherto used the assistance of a friend, to write what I dictated to him; but in order to assure you that this epistle is genuine, I here add *the salutation of* [*me*] *Paul*, your well known minister, and father in the gospel, *with my own hand;* most cordially wishing you every blessing, both temporal and spiritual. And let me here

22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him

22 add, (that being thus written with my own pen, it may have the greater weight;) *If* there be *any man* amongst you, or elsewhere, who under the specious forms of Christianity *loveth not the Lord Jesus Christ* in sincerity; but maintains a secret alienation of heart from him

[d] *Aquila and Priscilla.*] They had formerly made some abode at Corinth; and there St. Paul's acquaintance with them commenced. Acts xviii 1, 2. It is therefore no wonder they were particular in their salutations.—Some copies add παρ' οἷς ξενίζομαι, *with whom also I lodge;* but the authority of those manuscripts is small.

SECT. XXXII.

1 Cor. XVI. 22.

while he calls himself his servant, preferring any interest of his own to that of his Divine Master: *let him be Anathema Maran-atha*:[e] such an one is indeed worthy of the most dreadful curse, and if he persist in such a wretched temper, it will certainly fall upon him. And let him be assured, that though his crime be of such a nature as not to admit human conviction and censure; yet it is known to him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, so that he searches the hearts and trieth the reins. And ere long, the Lord himself will come in awful pomp, to execute vengeance upon him, pronouncing him accursed before the assembled world, and devoting him to utter and everlasting destruction.

be Anathema, Maranatha.

23 But it is my hearty prayer, that no such root of bitterness and heir of misery may be found among you; and that it may not, may *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* [*be*] *with you*, and all the blessed tokens and effects of his favour rest upon you, for time and eternity!

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you.

24 Be assured, that in what I have here said, I intend nothing in the least unkind to any single person among you. Far from that, *my* tenderest and most affectionate *love* [*be*] *with you all in Christ Jesus*;[f] depend therefore upon my con-

24 My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

[e] *Anathema—Maran-atha.*] Among the many various interpretations of these words, none seems to me so probable and satisfactory as this—when the Jews lost the power of life and death, they used nevertheless to pronounce an anathema on persons who according to the Mosaic law, should have been executed; and such a person became an anathema, or cherem, or accursed; for the expressions are equivalent. They had a full persuasion, that the curse would not be in vain; and indeed it appears they expected some judgment correspondent to that which the law pronounced, would befal the offender; for instance, that a man to be stoned, would be killed by the falling of a stone or other heavy body upon him; a man to be strangled, would be choaked; or one whom the law sentenced to the flames, would be burnt in his house, and the like. Now to express their faith, that God would one way or another, and probably in some remarkable manner interpose, to add that efficacy to his own sentence which they could not give it; it is very probable they might use the words, *Maran-atha* that is, in Syriac, *the Lord cometh*, or he will surely and quickly come to put this sentence into execution, and to shew that the person on whom it falls, is indeed *anathema, accursed.* In beautiful allusion to this, when the apostle was speaking of a secret alienation from Christ, maintained under the forms of Christianity, (which might perhaps be the case among many of the Corinthians, and much more probably may be so among us,) as this was not a crime capable of being convicted and censured in the Christian church, he reminds them that the Lord Jesus Christ will come at length, and find it out, and punish it in a proper manner, This weighty sentence the apostle chose to write with his own hand, and insert between his general salutation and benediction, that it might be the more attentively regarded. Compare Grot. on Rom. v. 13; and Isa. xiv. 20. Bishop Patrick on Deut. xxvii. 15.

[f] *My love* [*be*] *with you all in Christ Jesus.*] When we consider, what an alien-

stant readiness to do all in my power, for promoting and establishing the Christian interest among you: and may it flourish more and more, till your happiness be completed in the kingdom of God above. *Amen.*

SECT. XXXII. 1 Cor. XVI. 24.

IMPROVEMENT.

HOWEVER the particular trials of Christians may vary in different ages, the same works in general, demand their diligence: the same enemies, their watchfulness; the same difficulties, their courage and fortitude: nor will they ever be more likely to perform, to resist, and to endure well, than when charity reigns in their hearts, and presides over the whole of their behaviour. (Verse 13, 14)

We owe our humble thanks to the author of all good, when he raises up the spirits of his servants to any distinguished activity and zeal in his cause. Christians of standing superior to their brethren, ought to emulate such a character; and when they do so with genuine marks of becoming modesty and upright views, let all proper respect be paid to them: especially to those who are honoured with, and labour faithfully in, the ministerial office. To such let others *submit themselves in love;* not indeed as to *the lords of their faith*, which even the apostles pretended not to be; but as friends, whom they esteem and reverence, ever tenderly solicitous to secure their comfort, and increase their usefulness. (15, 16)

We see how much the apostle was concerned to promote mutual friendship among the disciples of our blessed Redeemer: how kindly he delivers the salutations of one, and another. It becomes us to remember each other with cordial regard, and in imitation of this wise example, to do all we can to cultivate a good understanding among our Christian brethren; and to abhor that disposition *to sow discord*, which has been so fatally successful in producing *envyings, and strife, and every evil work.* (19, 20)

To conclude all; let us lay up in our memory, and often review, this awful sentence, this *Anathema—Maran-atha*, which, to give it the greater weight, the apostle records *with his own hand.* Let it ever be remembered, that professing Christians, who do not sincerely love their Master, lie under the heaviest curse which an apostle can pronounce, or a God inflict. Let the unhappy creatures take the alarm, and labour to obtain a more ingenuous temper, ere the Lord, whom they neglect, and (22, 21)

ation of affection some of these Corinthians had expressed, with respect to the apostle, this expression of tender regard to them all without any exception, is so much the more affectionate; but it would not have been agreeable to the generous spirit which dictated it, to have glanced too plainly on that circumstance in the paraphrase.

SECT. XXXII. against whom they entertain a secret enmity, descend from heaven with unsupportable terror, and pronounce the anathema with his own lips, in circumstances which shall for ever cut off all hope and all possibility of its being reversed. If his solemn voice pronounce, his almighty hand will immediately execute it. *How will they be cast down to destruction, as in a moment! How will they be utterly consumed with terrors!* To prevent so dreadful an end of our high profession, of our towering hopes, *may* Verse 23 *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us! Amen.*

THE END OF THE FAMILY EXPOSITOR ON THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR:

OR,

A PARAPHRASE

ON THE

SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS;

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.

A

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

PARAPHRASE AND NOTES

ON THE

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

THE first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians was written, as hath been before observed, from Ephesus, about the year of our Lord 57; towards the end of his continuance there, and in the neighbouring parts. (See Vol. III. sect. 44. note *a*.) Upon leaving Ephesus, the apostle removed to Troas, which was situated on the shore of the Ægean sea, in the expectation of meeting Titus, and receiving an account of the success with which he hoped his former epistle had been attended, and of the present state of the Corinthian church; (2 Cor. ii. 12.) But not meeting him there, (ver. 13,) he proceeded to Macedonia, where he obtained his desired interview, and received satisfaction concerning the promising state of affairs at Corinth. From this place the apostle wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, intrusting it to the care of Titus, who was returning to Corinth to forward the collection intended for the poor Christians in Judea. From these historical circumstances, the date of this second epistle must be fixed within a year after the former. (See Vol. III. sect. 45. note *b*.)

In the Introduction to the first epistle we observed, that its design was to rectify some sad disorders and abuses which had crept into the church of Corinth; and

answer their queries upon some important points, in which they had desired his determination. The intention of the present epistle is, in general, to illustrate some of the same points upon which he had discoursed in the former, according to the light which Titus had given him into the circumstances and temper of the Corinthian church; interspersing and inforcing some occasional reflections and advices upon various subjects, as he thought most conducive to their instruction and edification.

But to give a more distinct view of the scheme and contents of this second epistle—The apostle, after a general salutation, expresses his grateful sense of the Divine goodness, in preserving him from the dangers to which he had been exposed in Asia; professing his unshaken confidence in God's continued guardianship, supported by a sense of his own integrity: (chap. i. 1—12.) Which declaration of his integrity he further illustrates; applying it particularly to those views on which he had declined the visit to Corinth, which in the former epistle he seems to have promised, (ver. 13, to the end.) The case of the unhappy person, who had committed incest with his father's wife, and whom upon account of the scandal he had brought on his Christian profession, the apostle directed them to exclude from communion, had made a deep impression on his mind: This, he intimates, was the reason of his having deferred his visit to Corinth; that he might not meet them with grief, nor till he had received advice of the effect of his apostolical admonitions, and their salutary and seasonable discipline. The affection of the apostle to the Corinthians is here manifested, both in his sympathy with the offending member of their church while under censure, whom now, being penitent, he advises them to re-admit to their communion; and also in his solicitude for certain tidings concerning their welfare by Titus, whom not finding at Troas, (as before observed,) he went to meet in Macedonia, (chap. ii. 1—15.)

In further vindication and support of his apostolical character against the insinuations and objections of the false teachers at Corinth, the apostle, having just intima-

ed that a large door of success had been opened to him at Troas, and elsewhere, makes a transition to this subject; and expresses in the most affectionate terms his thanksgiving to God for having intrusted him with the ministry of the gospel, and for the success attending his services; declaring his lively confidence in all events, of the Divine acceptance, and speaking of the Corinthians as his credentials written by the finger of God, (ver. 14, *to the end,* chap. iii. 1—6.) And as an illustration of the dignity of the ministerial office, he descants in a very pertinent and judicious manner, on the comparative obscurity of the Mosaic law, and the superior glory and permanence of the gospel, (ver. 7, *to the end.*) He then disclaims all sinister views, and distrust of success, in pursuing the glorious ministry he had described, from a firm persuasion that such a gospel could not be rejected, but in consequence of the most fatal prejudices, (chap. iv. 1—6.) And while he acknowledges his own infirmities, he glories in the strength communicated to him from God, as an effectual support under the extremest trials; (ver. 7—15;) describing the glorious hopes which he entertained beyond the grave, as a ground of triumph in the face of danger, and a noble incentive to persevering fidelity and stedfastness, (ver. 16, *to the end;* chap. v. 1—10.) Touching again upon the ardour with which he prosecuted the gospel-ministry, he makes a kind of apology for it, pleading the irresistible constraints of the Redeemer's love, and the infinite importance of the overtures of reconciliation; which in a most pathetic address he urges the Corinthians to embrace, (ver. 11, *to the end.* chap. vi. 1, 2.) And then expatiates with great copiousness on the temper with which, in the midst of afflictions and persecutions, he and his brethren executed their important embassy, (ver. 3—10.)

It is easy to observe, on the most cursory view of this argument, with what delicacy, as well as energy, it is all along conducted. As the apostle manages his subject in the tenderest and most affectionate manner, and intermingles general reflections for the instruction and consolation of the Corinthians; which however had an

evident subservience to his main design; he conciliates their regard, and fixes the impressions which his former epistle had made, in a more insinuating and therefore more effectual way, than if he had exerted his authority, and wrote with more closeness and severity of stile. And having been informed by Titus, that the defence of his mission, and apology for his conduct, contained in his former epistle, had not been utterly in vain, he manifests his satisfaction in the present disposition of the Corinthians, by giving his reasonings upon this head a more diffusive and practical turn.

After this, the epistle affords us a farther instance of his affection, in his judicious and pathetic exhortation to the Corinthians, (additional to what he had formerly said, when they desired his opinion upon the head of marriage,) to avoid those alliances or intermarriages with idolaters, which might tend to ensnare them; pleading the gracious promises of God to his people, as an engagement to the strictest purity, and as a motive to aspire after the sublimest attainments in religion, (ver. 11, *to the end.* chap. vii. 1.)

From this digression he returns to the subject he had before been treating; and to remove any degree of prejudice which might yet lurk in their breasts against his apostolical character, he appeals to them for the integrity and disinterestedness of his conduct; professing that the freedom he uses was not intended to reproach their diffidence, but sprung from an unfeigned and ardent concern for their welfare; which he illustrates by the pleasure with which he received the assurances of their good state by Titus, and the part he had taken in their sorrows, which his necessary reproofs had occasioned, and by his present joy, in that those sorrows had happily issued in their reformation, (ver. 2, *to the end.*)

The apostle had proposed to the Corinthians, in the close of the former epistle, their making a contribution for the relief of the poor saints in Judea: resuming the subject, he recommends to them the example of the Macedonians, reminds them of the grace of our blessed Redeemer, and gives some advices as to the manner of collecting and transmitting their bounty; (chap. viii.

1—13. Expressing his joy for the readiness of Titus to assist in finishing the collection, and making an honourable mention of the worthy character of other Christian brethren, whom he had joined with him in the same commission, (ver. 16, to the end.) He then with admirable address further urges their liberal contribution, and in a full assurance of its success, recommends them to the Divine blessing, (chap. ix. throughout.)

Having expressed, in the former part of the epistle, and on occasion of this contribution, his confidence in the abundant grace which had been bestowed on the Corinthians, the apostle takes an opportunity of stating and obviating some reflections which some among them had thrown upon him for the mildness of his conduct, as if it proceeded from fear. He therefore asserts his apostolical power and authority; cautioning his opponents that they should not urge him to give too sensible demonstrations of it upon themselves, (chap. x. throughout.) And further vindicates himself from the perverse insinuations of such as opposed him at Corinth; particularly on the head of his having declined to receive a contribution from the church for his maintenance; which, though greatly to his honour, was by his opposers ungenerously turned to his disadvantage, (chap. xi. 1—15.) To magnify his office as an apostle, he commemorates his labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ; yet in such a manner, as plainly shews it was disagreeable, however necessary it might be, to dwell on a subject that appeared like sounding his own applause, (ver. 16, to the end.) And with great clearness and plainness, yet at the same time with equal reluctance and modesty, he gives a detail of some extraordinary revelations which he had received from God, and of his experience of those Divine aids which taught him to glory in his own infirmities, (chap. xii. 1—10.) And upon the whole, vindicates the undisguised openness and sincerity of his conduct, and his visible superiority to secular considerations, in all his carriage towards the church at Corinth, (ver 11. to the end.) Closing his epistle with the tenderest assuran-

ces, how much it would grieve him to be obliged to evince his apostolical power, by inflicting any miraculous punishment on those who continued to oppose him; and then subjoining the most respectful salutations, and his solemn benediction, (chap. xiii. throughout.)

It is evident from this view of the epistle, that a very large part of it is employed in reclaiming the Corinthian church from their undue attachment to Judaizing teachers, and from that party-spirit into which they had fallen; and in re-kindling proper regards to the unadulterated doctrine of the gospel, and to his own apostolical counsels, who had been their spiritual father in Christ. That this leading design of the apostle is occasionally interrupted by the introduction of other matters, and particularly the subject of the contribution for the poor saints in Judea, will be no objection, I apprehend, if narrowly examined, to the accuracy and beauty of this excellent composition; for the transitions which St. Paul makes, arise from some obvious and important sentiments, which render them natural and just. And there is an admirable wisdom in such digressions, as they relieve the minds of the Corinthians from that painful uneasiness which they must have felt from a constant attention to so disagreeable a subject; I mean their unsuitable conduct towards the apostle himself. It is with the same kind of propriety and sagacity, that the severe intimations, which the dignity of the apostolic character obliged St. Paul to drop against those who might persevere in their opposition, are reserved to the close of the epistle; as they would fall with additional weight, in all probability, after their minds had been softened with the reiterated expressions of his tender affection to the Corinthians in general, and the innocence and amiableness of his character had been represented in such a variety of views.

A

PARAPHRASE AND NOTES

ON THE

SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

SECT. I.

The Apostle Paul, after a general salutation, expresses his grateful sense of the Divine goodness, in preserving him from the dangers to which he had been exposed in Asia; professing his unshaken confidence in God's continued guardianship, supported by the consciousness of his integrity before him. 2 Cor. I. 1—12.

2 CORINTHIANS I. 1.

SECT. I. — 2 Cor. I. 1.

2 COR. I. 1. PAUL an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and

YOU receive this epistle from *Paul*, who hath the honour to call himself *an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the* sovereign *will of God;* who hath shewn by the victory of his grace over me, how able he is to bend the most obdurate and reluctant will to his own purposes, and triumph over the opposition of the most obstinate heart. *And Timothy, a* beloved *brother*[a] in

[a] *Timothy, a* beloved *brother.*] This shews, that Timothy was returned to St. Paul, since he wrote the last epistle; and his joining the name of Timothy with his own, is an instance of the generous desire which St. Paul had to establish, as much as possible, the reputation and influence of this excellent young minister. Some have thought this is the reason why the apostle so often speaks in the *plural* number in this epistle; but it is certain, he often speaks in the *singular*, and that there are passages here, as well as in the epistle to the Thessalonians, in which he

SECT. I.

2 Cor. I. 1.

Christ Jesus, joins with me in this second address *to the church of God, that is in Corinth;* whom he hath mercifully called out from the world, and united to himself. A society for which I have always the tenderest regard; the respective members of which I now most cordially salute; *with all,* who, by their Christian profession, are numbered among *the saints,* that

Timothy *our* brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:

2 are *in the whole region of Achaia.* I greet you, as I do all my brethren in such addresses: saying from my heart, May *grace and peace* [*be*] in rich abundance communicated *to you* all, *from God our Father,* the compassionate Source of universal goodness, *and* from *the Lord Jesus Christ;* through whom alone such invaluable blessings can be conveyed to such sinful crea-

2 Grace *be* to you, and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 tures as we are. While I sit down to write to you, my dear brethren, in the midst of circumstances, which the world might think very deplorable, (compare 1 Cor. iv. 9, &c.) I cannot forbear bursting out into the language of joy and praise,[b] for such a variety of Divine favours, as is conferred on myself and you. *Blessed,* for ever blessed, by the united songs of men and angels, [*be*] *the* great *God and Father of our* beloved *Lord* and gracious Saviour *Jesus Christ,* through whom we have this free access to him, this secure interest in him: so that we can now, with unutterable delight, view him as *the Father of mercies,* from whose paternal compassion all our comforts and hopes are derived; *and* as *the God of all consolation,* whose nature it is ever to have mercy, and who knows how to proportion his supports to the exigence of every trial.

3 Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4 For ever adored be this benevolent and compassionate Being, *who comforteth us in all our* pressing *tribulation,*[c] by such seasonable appear-

4 Who comforteth us in all our tri-

uses the *plural,* without intending to include Timothy. See chap. iii. 1—3; chap. vii. 5; chap. xii. 19; 2 Thess. ii. 1—9. He also joins the name of Sosthenes with his own, in the former epistle, as also the name of Timothy to the epistle to the Philippians, and Colossians; yet does not use the *plural* there.

[b] Cannot forbear bursting out, &c.] It is very observable, that *eleven* of St. Paul's *thirteen epistles* begin with *exclamations* of joy, praise and thanksgiving. As soon as he thought of a Christian church planted in one place or another, there seems to have been a flow of most lively affection accompanying the idea, in which all sensibility of his temporal affliction, or theirs, was all swallowed up, and the fulness of his heart must vent itself in such cheerful, exalted and devout language.

[c] *Comforteth us.*] It is certain, that

SECT. I.

2 Cor. I. 4

bulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

ances in our favour. And this, I know, is not merely for our own sakes, but *that we*, taught by our own experience, *may be able*, in the most tender, suitable, and effectual manner, *to comfort those who are in any tribulation*, *by the* communication of that *comfort whereby we ourselves are comforted of God*;[d] and methinks every support I feel, is much endeared to me, by the consideration, that the benefit of it may be reflected upon others.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

5 *Because as the sufferings* we endure in the cause *of Christ*, and in conformity to his example, *abound with respect to us, so our consolation by Christ*, the comforts which arise from God in him, *does abound* much more, and quite over-balance the distress.

6 And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation.

6 And much of this satisfaction to us arises from the hope we have with relation to you, my dear friends and Christian brethren; *for whether we be afflicted*, [*it is*] we doubt not, *in subservience to* the views of *your* present *consolation, and* your future and eternal *salvation; which is* so much the more *effectually wrought out*, *by the patient enduring of the same sufferings, which we also undergo*, and which by our example you are taught the less to wonder at, and to bear with the greater fortitude: *or whether we be comforted* [*it is*] still with the same view, *for your consolation and salvation;* that your eternal happiness may be promoted by those comforts which we are enabled to communicate to you with the greater efficacy.

7 And our hope of you *is* stedfast, knowing that as you are

7 *And our hope concerning you*, that this will be the happy end of all, [*is*] *stedfast* and cheerful:[e] *knowing, that as ye are*

the mention of these experiences must have a powerful tendency to conciliate the regard of the Corinthians to St. Paul; and such an introduction to his epistle, as the whole of this is, must naturally prejudice them strongly in his favour; yet this does not seem to have been by any means his aim, nor is there any appearance of art in it; but all is the genuine overflowing of an heart, which rejoiced in the consolations of the gospel felt by itself, and communicated to others. See verse 12, which is much illustrated by this connection.

[d] *Comforted of God.*] Some think this refers particularly to the comfort which the repentance of the incestuous person gave St. Paul, after the affliction he had endured on his account; (compare chap. vii. 7;) but it seems more natural, to understand it of the general consolation arising from the pardon of sin, an interest in God, an assurance that nothing should separate him from Christ, that afflictions should co-operate for his advantage, and that a crown of glory heightened by these trials should close the scene. On these topics he frequently insists in his epistles, and none can be more important and delightful.

[e] *Our hope concerning you is stedfast.*] These words, in several good manuscripts, are put in connection with the first clause of the 6th verse; and so the version will

SECT. I.

2 Cor. I. 7

partakers of the sufferings to which we refer, *so* you *also* have already, in some degree, your share *of the consolation* which arises from principles and hopes which are not peculiar to us, who are apostles, or inferior ministers of the gospel, but common to all sincere believers; in which number I persuade myself that you in the general are.

partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation.

8 We write thus concerning the trials of the Christian life, having so lately experienced them in a large measure: *for we would not have you,* our dear *brethren, ignorant concerning our affliction, which* within these few months, *befell us in Asia,*[f] and particularly at Ephesus; *that we were exceedingly pressed* with it, even *beyond our power; so that we despaired of being able even to live* any longer, and were looked upon by others

8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:

9 as dead men. *And* not only did others apprehend this concerning us, but *we ourselves* did indeed think, that the appointed end of our ministry and life was come; and had, as it were, *received the sentence of death in ourselves,* the execution of which we were continually expecting; but the event shewed, that it was wisely appointed by Divine Providence to make our deliverance the more remarkable; and *that we might* learn for the future, *not* to *trust in ourselves,* nor merely to regard human probabilities, *but* in the greatest extremities to repose a cheerful confidence *in* the power and providence of

9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God

run thus, *Whether we be afflicted, it is in subservience to your consolation and salvation, which is effectually wrought out by the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also undergo; and our hope concerning you is stedfast: or, whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation; knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also of the consolation.* And the repetition of the words *consolation,* and *salvation,* shews how agreeable the thought was to him; so that he loved to speak of it again and again.

[f] *The afflictions which befel us in Asia.*] Mr. Cradock thinks, that here he begins to apologize for not coming to Corinth, and introduces these troubles as an excuse for not seeing them. I think it is rather to be connected with the preceding discourse. Yet still it might incline them to drop their complaints, and judge more favourably of him, when they considered in what painful and dangerous circumstances he had, on the present openings of duty, been spending that time in which they had been expecting him at Corinth. As for the *afflictions* here spoken of, some have thought, that this may refer to the persecutions at Lystra, where St Paul's danger had been so extreme, and he had been recovered by miracle; (Acts xiv. 19, 20;) but as that happened so long before the visit to Corinth, in which he planted the church there, (Acts xviii. 1.) it seems more probable, that he either refers to some opposition which he met with in his journey through Galatia and Phrygia, (Acts xviii. 23,) of which no particular account has reached us; or to what happened at Ephesus, (Acts xix. 29, 30,) which is Dr. Whitby's opinion.

SECT. I.

2 Cor. I. 10.

which raiseth the dead.

10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver *us*:

that *God, who raiseth the dead*, at his holy pleasure, by his omnipotent word: *Who rescued us*, on this ever-memorable occasion, *from so great a death* as then threatened us, *and doth rescue* us from every danger which now surrounds us, and *in whom we trust that he will* make our deliverance complete, and *still rescue* us from every evil, and preserve us to his heavenly kingdom.

11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift *bestowed* upon us by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

11 I say, that I have this confidence in God's continual care; and it is the more cheerful, as I persuade myself *you* are, and will be, *working together in prayer for us, that so the favour* [*obtained*] *for us by* the importunate prayers of *many, may be acknowledged by the thanksgiving of many on our account*[g]; as nothing can be more reasonable, than that mercies obtained by prayer, should be owned in praise.

12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.

12 And this confidence which we have both towards God and you, is much emboldened, as we have an inward assurance of our own integrity, however men may suspect, or censure us: *for this is* still *our rejoicing*, which no external calamities can impair, or injuries destroy, even *the testimony of our conscience* in the sight of God who searcheth the secrets of all hearts, *that in simplicity*[h], *and godly sincerity*, maintaining perpetually that sense of the Divine presence and inspection, which is the surest guard upon unfeigned integrity, and *not with* that *carnal wisdom* which is so ungenerously and unrighteously imputed to us, *but by the grace of God*, and such sentiments of fidelity and benevolence as that blessed principle inspires, *we have had*, and still continue to have, *our conversation in the world; and more especially towards you*[i], with respect

[g] *That so the favour obtained*, &c.] There is something very perplexed and ambiguous in the structure of this sentence. I have sometimes thought it might be rendered, that, (ὑπερ ἡμων) *on our account, thanks may be rendered by many persons, for* (το εις ἡμας χαρισμα,) *the gift*, or miraculous endowment, *which is in us*, or deposited with us, (δια πολλων,) *for the sake of many*: as if he had said, That many may join with us, in returning thanks for these miraculous endowments which were lodged with me, not for my own sake, but for the benefit of many. This would be a sentiment worthy an apostle; but the rendering in the paraphrase seemed, on the whole, the most natural and simple; especially as δια, with a genitive, seldom, if ever, signifies *for the sake*, but rather *by the means* of any afterwards mentioned.

[h] *Simplicity, plain-heartedness.*] Not only meaning well on the whole, but declining an over artful way of prosecuting a good end.

[i] *Especially towards you.*] His working

SECT. I.

2 Cor. I. 12.

to whom, in some circumstances of opposition that have happened among you, we have been peculiarly obliged to watch over our conduct; lest inadvertency should in any instance give an handle to the malice of our enemies, to exert itself, in strengthening prejudices against us, and destroying those fruits of our labours among you, for which we could not but be greatly concerned.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1 LET the venerable title of saints, by which the apostle so often describes and addresses Christians, be ever retained in our minds; that we may remember the obligations we are under to answer it, as we would avoid the guilt and infamy of lying to God and men, by falsely and hypocritically professing the best religion, very possibly to the worst, undoubtedly to the vainest purposes. And that we may be excited to a sanctity becoming 3 this title, let us often think of God, *as the Father of mercies, and as the God of all consolation;* and let us think of him, as assuming these titles, under the character of the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:* so shall we find our hearts more powerfully engaged to love and trust in him, and enter into a more intimate acquaintance and frequent converse with him.

4 From him let us seek consolation in every distress; considering these supports, which we so experience, not as given for ourselves alone, but for others; that we, on the like principles, may comfort them. Let ministers, in particular, regard them in this view, and rejoice in these tribulations which may render them more capable of *comforting such as are in any trouble by those consolations with which they themselves have been comforted by God;* that so the church may be edified, and God glorified in 11 all, by *the thanksgiving of many,* for mercies *obtained in* answer to *united prayers.*

Let us particularly remember the support which St. Paul experienced, when he was *pressed above measure, and* as it seemed, 9 quite *beyond his strength,* so *as to despair of life, and received the sentence of death in himself;* as what was wisely appointed to teach him a firmer confidence *in God who raiseth the dead.* Strong as his faith was, it admitted of farther degrees; and the improvement of it was a happy equivalent for all the extremities he suffered. He therefore glories, as secure of being *rescued from*

with his own hands for his maintenance, among the Corinthians, (Acts xviii. 3: 1 Cor. ix. 15,) which he did not every where do, must be a convincing proof of this.

future dangers. Nor was his faith vain, though he afterwards fell by the hand of his enemies, and seemed as helpless a prey to their malice and rage, as any of the multitudes whose blood Nero, or the instruments of his cruelty, poured out like water. Death is itself the grand rescue to a good man, which bears him to a state of everlasting security; and in this sense every believer may adopt the apostle's words, and while he acknowledges past and present, may assuredly boast of future deliverances.

SECT. I. Verse 10

Happy shall we therefore be, if by Divine grace we are enabled at all times, to maintain the temper and conduct of Christians; and may confidently rejoice in *the testimony of our consciences,* that *our conversation in the world is in simplicity and godly sincerity;* that our ends in religion are great and noble; that our conduct is simple and uniform; in a word, that we act as *in the sight of an heart-searching God.* Then may we look upon the applauses, or the censures of men, as comparatively a very light matter; and may rest assured, if, as with regard to the apostle in the instance before us, he suffers a malignant breath for a while to obscure the lustre of our character, the day is near which will reveal it in unclouded glory.

12

SECT. II.

The Apostle goes on solemnly to declare his general integrity; and particularly applies that declaration to the views on which he had declined that visit to Corinth, which he had intimated an intention of making. 2 Cor. I. 13, *to the end.*

2 COR. I. 13.

FOR we write none other things unto you, than what ye read, or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end;

14 As also you have acknowledged us in part, that we

2 CORINTHIANS I. 13.

I SPEAK of the integrity with which I have conducted myself among you, with great freedom; *for we write no other things to you* on this head, *but what ye* well *know*[a], *and* must be obliged to *acknowledge; and I hope, that ye will* have equal cause to *acknowledge* [*them*] *even unto the end;* for by the Divine grace, you shall never have just cause to speak or think dishonourably of us, or to reflect upon any inconsistency in our behaviour. *As indeed ye have already acknowledged us in part;* you have acknowledged, that you have had no occasion of blaming us; for though some among you are not so ready to do us justice as the rest are, yet

SECT. II. 2 Cor. I. 13.

14

[a] *What ye know.*] The word ἀναγινώσκω is ambiguous, and may signify either to *acknowledge,* to *know,* or to *read;* but I think the sense here plainly determines it to *knowing.*

SECT. II.

2 Cor. I. 14.

most avow it with pleasure and thankfulness, *that we are your boasting*, and that ye have cause to glory in your relation to us; *as ye also* in this respect, (with humble gratitude to the great author of all our successes, be it ever spoken,) [*are*] *ours* now, and will, I trust, be so *in the* great *day of the Lord Jesus;* when we hope to present you before Christ, as the seals of our ministry, and to lead you on to that heavenly kingdom, in the faithful pursuit of which we have already been so happy as to engage you.

are your rejoicing, even as ye also *are* ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.

15 *And in this confidence I was* long *before desirous of coming to you*, and enjoying another interview with friends, who have long lain so near my heart: that the expected transports of that blessed day, might in some degree be anticipated, both on my part and on yours; and accordingly would have come to you much sooner, not only on my own account, but likewise *that ye might have had a second benefit;* as I doubted not but it would have been much to your advantage, as well as have given you a great deal of joy, to have seen and conversed with your father in Christ, who had once been so dear and

15 And in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that you might have a second benefit;

16 so welcome to you. *And* indeed my scheme was *to pass by you into Macedonia*, and make you a short visit [b] in my way thither; *and* then having dispatched my business in the churches there, *to come to you again from Macedonia, and* make a longer stay; that so I might *be brought forward by you in my journey toward Judea*, when I shall go thither to deliver the money raised by the contribution of the Gentile Christians for their Jewish brethren, when they shall

16 And to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia, unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judæa.

[b] Make you a short visit.] δι' ὑμων διελθειν εις Μακεδονιαν some have understood of going into Macedonia without calling on them in his way. But as he went from Ephesus to Macedonia, it was not his direct way to go by Corinth; especially considering the road we know he did take, by Troas; and if he were now in Macedonia, as I think there is great reason to believe he was, there would on that interpretation have been no such appearance of change in his purpose, as should have needed any apology. I therefore conclude, that his first scheme was to have made them two visits, the one in his way to Macedonia, (perhaps sailing from Ephesus to Corinth,) and then another and longer, in his return. This the word παλιν, *again*, [illegible] to intimate, and if this were his purpose, it was now plain in fact, that he had changed it. The grand objection against this is 1 Cor. xvi. 7, which can only be reconciled by a supposition, that he had altered his purpose between the date of that epistle and his quitting Ephesus; and had given them, perhaps, by some verbal message, some intimation of it.

meet at Jerusalem on occasion of some of their great feasts. (See Acts xx. 16.)

17 When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay?

Now when I intended this, did I use levity in projecting my scheme, or throwing it aside on any trifling occasion? *Or the things which I purpose* in general, *do I purpose according to the flesh;* according to carnal principles and views; that I should be continually changing my measures in the prospect of every little interest that may lead one way or another, and breaking my word, *so that there should be with me yea, yea, and nay, nay:* such an uncertainty and inconsistency of counsels and actions, that none should know how to depend upon me, or what they had to expect from me? No; I so-

18 But *as* God *is* true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

18 lemnly protest, that [*as*] the *God,* whom I serve [*is*] *faithful, our word to you* on other occasions, and on this, *hath not been* wavering and uncertain; sometimes *yea, and* sometimes *nay;* but that I have always maintained a consistency of behaviour, the natural attendant of sincerity and truth, which is always uniform and invaria-

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus, and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

19 ble. *For* our Lord *Jesus Christ, the Son of God,* our great Redeemer, *who was preached by us amongst you,* that is, *by me, and Silvanus, and Timothy,* who joined our labours among you, (Acts xviii. 15.) as we now join in writing to you this epistle, (according to what I observed in the inscription of it,) *was not yea and nay:* Christ and his gospel were not inconsistent and contradictory; *but in him* all *was yea:* as he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the declarations of his word, and the engagements of his

20 For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him

20 covenant, are inviolably the same. *For all the* many and invaluable precious *promises of God,* which are given us by this covenant, and established in his blood, [*are*] *in him yea, and in him amen.*[c] They are now attended with stipu-

[c] *In him yea, and in him amen.*] Nothing can really render the promises of God more certain than they are; but God's giving them to us through Christ, assures us, that they are indeed his promises, as in Christ there is such a real evidence of his conversing with men; and as the wonders which God hath actually wrought in the incarnation, life, resurrection, and ascension of his Son, (facts in themselves much stranger than any of the glorious consequences to follow,) tend greatly to confirm our faith, and make it easier for us to believe such illustrious promises as those which are given us, the very greatness of which it might otherwise have been an impediment to our faith, and have created a suspicion, not whether God would have performed what he had promised, but whether such promises were really given us.

SECT. II.

2 Cor. I. 20.

lations and engagements, which may be sufficient to confirm the weakest faith, when we consider what an astonishing way God has been pleased to take for the communication of mercy by his Son; so that the more we attend to them, the more we shall see of their invariable truth and certainty; and all tends *to the glory of God by us*, which we constantly make the end of our administration, and so are animated to maintain one regular series of uniform truth, as in his sight and presence.

amen, unto the glory of God by us.

21 But we say not this, as arrogating any thing to ourselves; *for* we must readily acknowledge, that *he who also* by his strengthening grace, confirmeth and *establisheth us,*[d] *together with you, in* the faith and love of *Christ, and* he that *hath anointed us,* as a kind of first fruits of his creatures, with that Spirit, which gives us a capacity for all the services to which we are called out, and furnishes us with all our credentials

21 Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God.

22 in it, [*is*] the blessed *God* himself: *Who hath also sealed us*[e] to mark and secure[f] us for his peculiar property, *and* in farther confirmation of his regard for us, *given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts,* those sacred communications both of gifts and graces which lead us into enjoyments that we look upon as the anticipation of heaven, and not only as a pledge, but a foretaste of it. This is the happy state into which we are now brought, for which I desire ever to glorify and adore the Divine goodness, and to behave, as one that is favoured

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

[d] *Establisheth us.*] To explain this of furnishing St. Paul with such arguments as enabled him more and more to confirm the Corinthians in the Christian faith, and himself in the character of a faithful minister, is, I think, giving but a small part of the genuine and sublime sense of this excellent passage.

[e] *Hath anointed us—sealed us.*] Mons. Saurin thinks, that the difference between the *unction*, the *seal*, and the *earnest*, of the Spirit is this: that the *unction* chiefly refers to those extraordinary endowments by which the apostles were set apart to their work, as priests and kings were consecrated to theirs, by being anointed; the *seal*, to the sacraments, which marked them out as the peculiar property of God; and the *earnest* he explains, of those joys of the Holy Ghost, which were the anticipation of celestial happiness. See Saur. Ser. Vol. XI. p. 63—85.

[f] Mark and secure us.] That *sealing* refers to both these, is well shewn by Dr. Whitby's note on this text. Some understand this verse as insinuating how unreasonable it would be to suspect him of levity, who was sealed by such extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Compare John vi. 27. But that argument would be something precarious; and as he speaks of the *earnest of the Spirit* in the hearts of believers, I thought the interpretation here given much preferable.

SECT. II.

with such invaluable blessings, and with such glorious prospects as these.

2 Cor. I. 23.

23 Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.

But with respect to that change in my purpose of coming to you, which some would represent as an instance of a contrary conduct, *I call God for a record on my soul,* and declare to you, even as I hope he will have mercy upon it,[g] *that* it was, not because I slighted my friends, or feared mine enemies, but out of a real tenderness, and with a desire *to spare you* that uneasiness which I thought I must in that case have been obliged to give you, that *I came not as yet to Corinth;* as I had once intended, and given you some reason to expect.

24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

24 I mention this, *not because we* pretend to *have any* absolute *dominion over your faith,* so as of my own authority to dictate what you should believe, or do; nor would we exert the power with which Christ has endowed us, to any tyrannical or overbearing purposes; *but we,* even I, and all the faithful ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ, *are* joint *helpers of your joy:* we labour to use all the furniture which God hath given us, to the advancement of your real comfort and happiness; which can only be secured by reducing you to your duty: but this very care will oblige us sometimes to take disagreeable steps, with regard to those that act in such a manner, as might tend to subvert the faith of their brethren: *for by faith ye have stood* hitherto: I readily acknowledge you have in the general adhered to it; and it is by retaining the same principles pure and uncorrupted, with a realizing sense of them on our hearts, that we may still continue to stand in the midst of all the opposition we necessarily meet with from men insensible of every bond of duty and gratitude.

IMPROVEMENT.

ALL the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ: let us depend upon it, that they will be performed; and make it our

Verse 20

[g] Have mercy on it.] Nothing but the great importance of St. Paul's vindicating his character to such a church, would have justified the solemnity of such an oath.

SECT. II.

great care, that we may be able to say, that we are interested through him in the blessings to which they relate. Let there be a proportionable steadiness and consistence in our obedience; and let not our engagements to God be yea and nay, since his to us are so invariably faithful.

Verse 19, 21, 22 Are we *established in Christ?* Are we *sealed with the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts?* Let us acknowledge that it is God who hath imparted it to us; and let Christians of the greatest steadiness and experience be proportionably humble, rather than by any means elated on account of their superiority to others.

We see the light in which ministers should always consider themselves, and in which they are to be considered by others; *not as having dominion over th faith* of their people, having a right to dictate by their own authority, what they should believe, or, on the same principles, what they should do; but as helpers 24 of their joy, in consequence of being helpers of their piety and obedience. In this view, how amiable does the ministerial office appear! What a friendly aspect it wears upon the happiness of mankind! And how little true benevolence do they manifest, who would expose it to ridicule and contempt!

Let those who bear that office, be careful that they do not give it the most dangerous wound, and abet the evil works of those who despise and deride it; which they will most effectual- 17 ly do, if they appear *to form their purposes according to the flesh.* Let them with a single eye direct all their administrations to the glory of God and the edification of the church; that they may 13 be able to appeal to their hearers, as those that must acknowledge, and bear their testimony to their uprightness. In that case, they will be able to look on them as those in whom they 14 hope *to rejoice in the day of the Lord.* And if, while they pursue these ends, they are censured as actuated by any mean and less worthy principle, let them not be much surprised or discouraged: they share in exercises from which the blessed apostle St. Paul was not exempted; as indeed there is no integrity, or caution, which can guard any man from the effects of that malice against Christ and his gospel, with which some hearts overflow, when they feel themselves condemned by it.

SECT. III.

The Apostle expresses his great affection to the Corinthians, as manifested both in his sympathy with the offending member of their church, who, having been under censure, was now penitent; (in which view he advises his re-admission;) and also in his

solicitude for tidings concerning them from Titus, whom not finding at Troas, he went to meet in Macedonia. 2 Cor. II. 1—13.

2 COR. II. 1. BUT I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you with heaviness.

2 CORINTHIANS II. 1.

SECT. III.

2 Cor. II. 1.

I NOW plainly and faithfully tell you the true reason of that delay of my journey, which has so much surprised most of you, and at which some appear to be scandalized. It was not that I forgot you, or failed in any friendly regards to you; *but I determined this with myself*, on hearing how things stood among you, *that I would not*, if it could by any means be prevented, *come to you again in grief;*[a] in circumstances which must have grieved both myself and you; but that I would wait for these fruits which I had reason to hope from my endeavours in my former epistle, to regulate what had been amiss.

2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?

2 *For if I* should be obliged to *grieve you, who should then rejoice me, unless it be he who is* now *grieved by me?*[b] My affection to you as a church is indeed so great, that I could enjoy very little comfort myself, if you were in sorrow, especially in consequence of any act of mine, however necessary it were:

3 And I wrote this same unto you, lest when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice; having confidence in you all, that my joy is *the joy* of you all.

3 *And* therefore *I have written thus to you*, in order to the farther promoting of that reformation which is necessary to my own comfort, as well as to your honour and peace; *that I may not, when I come* again *have grief on account of those for whom I ought to rejoice, having this* confident *persuasion concerning you all* in general, *that my joy is* [*the joy*] *of you all*,[c] and that you do in the main bear the same

[a] *I would not come to you in grief.*] It may be objected, why then did he speak of coming in his former epistle, (1 Cor. xvi. 5—7,) when the incestuous person being yet impenitent, and their obedience to his directions, with relation to that case, being as yet unapproved, the cause of sorrow, and the necessity of grieving them, seemed yet greater than now? But it is very likely, that after he had writ that epistle, and perhaps while these things were in suspense, he had received news of other disorders among them; and indeed it is evident, that he seems apprehensive, even on supposition that the incestuous person were happily restored, he might yet be under a necessity of exercising an unwilling severity among them. Chap. xii. 20, 21; and chap. xiii. 1—6, 10.

[b] *Unless it be he who is grieved by me.*] It cannot reasonably be objected, that the sound part of the church would rejoice him; for even they would be grieved by the necessity of such severities; they would sympathize with the afflicted and corrected persons; and on the other hand, the recovery of offenders would give him more sensible joy than any thing else; which considerations taken together will abundantly justify this expression.

[c] *My joy is* the joy *of you all*] Mr. Locke argues from hence, that a distinction is to be made between the Corinthians, to whom this epistle was written, and the false teachers who were Jews,

SECT. III.

affection towards me, as I feel in my heart towards you. [4] *For* some time ago, *with much affliction, and* over-bearing *anguish*[d] *of heart, I wrote* an epistle *to you*,[e] which attended *with many tears*, and I designed by it, *not*, as you may be sure, *that ye might be grieved, but that ye might know*, by one of the most genuine tokens it which was possible for me to give, *that overflowing love which I bear to you*, of the degree and tenderness of which I was never myself so sensible as I have been since this sad occasion of discovering it happened. [5] *And if any one of you hath* been so unhappy as to have *occasioned grief, he hath only grieved me in part*; I am but one of a much greater number, who have felt this affectionate concern. And this I say, *that I may not overburden you all*, nor fix any unjust charge upon the whole body of the Corinthian church, as if it had taken part with such an offender in afflicting me: far from that, I rather believe it has sympathized with me in [6] my grief. And *sufficient to such an one*,[f] who hath here been the aggressor, [*is*] *this rebuke* and censure, [*that he hath*] already [*suffered*] *by many*, and indeed by the whole body of your society; which has shewn so wise and pious a readiness to pursue the directions I gave, for animadverting upon him, and bringing him [7] to repentance. *So that*, on the whole, I am well satisfied in what the church has done; and instead of urging you to pursue farther severities against him, who now, by the blessing of God

2 Cor II. 4

4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

6 Sufficient to such a man *is* this punishment, which *was* inflicted of many.

7 So that contra-

and who crept in among them, and whom he does not comprehend in the number of those concerning whom he speaks with such tenderness and hope. And thus he would reconcile this passage, and chap. vii. 13—15 with chap. xi. 13—15; chap. x. 6—11. Compare chap. xi. 22, where it is intimated some of them were Hebrews. But as we are sure some of the Corinthians had been seduced and alienated from St. Paul by them, I think it most reasonable to understand this as spoken of what he might conclude to be their general character; and it was both generous and prudent in the apostle to set it in this point of view.

[d] *Over bearing anguish.*] This seems the import of συνοχη; which nearly resembles συνεχει, (compare chap. v. 14,) which I render *bears away*.

[e] *Wrote* an epistle, &c.] Probably he here refers to such passages as those in the first epistle, which speak of scandalous persons among them, and direct to the methods to be taken to reduce them to order.

[f] *To such an one.*] Mr. Locke very well observes the great tenderness which the apostle uses to this offender; he never once mentions his *name*, nor does he here so much as mention his *crime*; but speaks of him in the most indefinite manner that was consistent with giving such directions in his case as love required.

SECT. III.

2 Cor. II. 7

rewise, *ye ought* rather to forgive *him*, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

on the discipline you have used, is become a penitent. I *on the contrary*, declare it to you as my judgment, that *you should rather forgive and comfort* [*him;*] *lest such a one*, if kept under continual rebuke, *should be swallowed up with an excess of sorrow*, and rendered incapable of those duties of the Christian life, to the performance of which, I would cheerfully hope that he is now inclined. 8 *Therefore I beseech you to confirm* [*the assurances*] and demonstrations [*of your*] *love to him*, in the most tender and endearing manner that you can; which may convince him that your seeming severity proceeded from cordial affection. 9 *For* indeed it was partly *to this purpose* that *I have written, that I might have experience of you, whether ye would be obedient in all things* to my apostolical instructions and decisions; and it gives me unspeakable pleasure to find that ye have been so. 10 And truly I have such confidence in you as a society, that I may say, not only in this instance, but in any other that may happen, that *to whom you forgive any thing* which hath been esteemed an offence, so as to be willing to restore the offender to your communion, *I also* shall be ready to [*forgive it;*] *and if I forgive any thing to whomsoever it may be*, [*it is*] not out of regard to the offender alone, but in a great measure *for your sakes*, that as *in the person of Christ*, and by the high authority with which he hath been pleased to invest me, I join in taking off the censure. 11 For I know the prosperity of the church in general is concerned in conducting these affairs aright, and am solicitous, *lest* if they be carried to any excess of rigour, *Satan should get an advantage over us*, and turn that severity into an occasion of mischief to the offender, to his brethren, and to others. *For we are not ignorant of his devices*, and of the great variety of stratagems which he is continually making use of to injure us, and to turn even discipline itself, to the reproach of the church, and the destruction of souls. 12 These are the sentiments which prevail in my heart towards you; and my conduct, since the date of my last epistle, hath been a genuine demonstration of this my affec-

8 Wherefore I beseech you, that ye would confirm *your* love towards him.

9 For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgive any thing, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it*, in the person of Christ;

11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Furthermore,

SECT. III.

2 Cor. II. 12.

tionate concern. *For when I came unto Troas*[g] *in the service of the gospel of Christ, and* found things there so situated, that *there was a* large *door opened to me in the Lord,* many circumstances seeming to invite my stay, and to give a prospect of success in my ministry; 13 Yet *I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find my brother Titus* there; whom I had sent to inquire into your affairs, and from whom I expected tidings of you. I would not therefore make any abode at Troas, though so many considerations concurred to invite me to it; *but taking my leave of them, I went* out of Asia *into Macedonia;* where I thought he might be, and where I had the happiness quickly to meet him, and to receive that news of you which has given me so much pleasure, and in consequence of which I have found occasion to write to you in a more comfortable manner, as I here do. And I bless God, that the purposes of my Christian ministry have not upon the whole been frustrated by this journey, but that the Divine blessing hath attended my labours here, as well as in the places which I left, that I might come hither.

when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,

13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

IMPROVEMENT.

Let ministers learn from hence, after the example of this wise and benevolent apostle, to be very tender of the ease and comfort of those committed to their care; doing nothing to grieve or distress them, unless, as in the case before us, love requires it, in order to their safety and happiness. Let them learn this candid and endearing method of putting the best interpretation upon every thing, and of believing, where there is any reason to hope it, that *their joy is the joy of their people also.* When professing Christians offend, and cannot be reclaimed by gentler methods, let them, not out of resentment, but affection, have recourse to the discipline which Christ hath instituted in his church;

Verse 1, 2

3

[g] *Came unto Troas.*] Mr. Owen, (of Ordin. Part 1. p. 124,) thinks this happened in St. Paul's journey from Corinth to Macedonia; and mentions it as a fact omitted by St. Luke, to be collected from the epistles. Many such facts there undoubtedly are, and this seems one of them, though not just in that circumstance. It seems to have happened in that passage from Asia to Macedonia, of which so very short an account is given, Acts xx. 1, 2. He afterward ordered some Christian friends, who were attending him to Asia after he had spent three months in Macedonia, to wait for him at Troas, (ib. verses 4, 5,) probably for this reason among others, that they might have an opportunity of preaching the gospel to a people who seemed so ready to receive it.

and when that discipline hath answered its end, and the offender is recovered to a sense of his evil, let them with the greatest pleasure concur in re-admitting him to the communion of the church from which he has been excluded; with a tender concern, *lest he should be swallowed up of over-much sorrow*; always considering, how watchful the enemy of souls is to *get an advantage over us*; and remembering, that it will be the peculiar wisdom of ministers, to acquaint themselves with these artful and malicious devices of Satan, by which he is incessantly endeavouring to distress and ruin the church, and to lay snares for its members in their hopes and their fears, their joys and their sorrows, so as to take occasion from every incident, and from every interest, to weaken and to wound them.

SECT. III. Verse 6, 7 — 8

The great source of a right conduct on all these occasions, is unfeigned love: that let us labour to establish in our hearts towards each other: praying that God, by his Spirit, would establish it. And though the consequence of this would be, that our spirits like the apostle's will be accessible to many sorrows which we should not otherwise feel; and though it is possible, that we like St. Paul in the instance before us, may sometimes be interrupted in active services of life, which we might otherwise have been more ready to pursue; yet we may hope, that while we are faithfully influenced by love, under the direction of that Christian prudence, which ought ever to attend it, views of usefulness may be opened, where we least expect them, may be opened one way, while they are obstructed another; yea, upon the whole, what has for a while interrupted our success, may in its remoter consequences greatly advance it.

4 — 12

SECT. IV.

The Apostle expresses, in the most affectionate terms, his thankfulness to God for having intrusted him with the ministry of the gospel, for the success attending his services therein; and declares his joyful confidence in all events of the Divine acceptance; and speaks of the Corinthians, as his credentials written by the finger of God. 2 Cor. II. 14, *to the end.* Chap. III. 1—6.

2 CORINTHIANS II. 14.

2 cor. II. 14. NOW thanks *be*

I HAVE informed you, that I left a fair opportunity of preaching the gospel at Troas, in consequence of that great desire I had to hear from you: for which purpose I went into Macedonia. *But* I desire thankfully to own the Divine goodness, in attending my ministry with very comfortable success there. And in-

SECT. IV. 2 Cor. II. 14.

SECT. IV.

2 Cor. II. 14.

deed I have great reason to break out into a transport of praise in the reflection: Yes, my brethren, thanks, everlasting *thanks* [*be rendered*] by you and me, *to the God* of all power and grace, *who always causeth us to triumph in Christ*,[a] carrying us on from one spiritual victory to another, *and manifesteth by us in every place, the* fragrant and powerful *odour of his* saving *knowledge*. Well may I rejoice upon this account: *for we* the apostles, and other ministers of his gospel, *are to God a sweet* and acceptable *odour of Christ*: he is as it were pleased and delighted with the incense of his name and gospel as diffused by us, both *with respect to them who* believe and *are saved, and to them, who* in consequence of their unbelief, *perish* in their sins. *To the latter indeed* [*we are*] *an odour of death*; the fragrancy, so rich in itself, instead of reviving, destroys them, and is efficacious *to* bring on *death* in its most dreadful forms. *But to the other* [*we are*] *an odour of life*; the gospel revives their souls, and is effectual *to* their eternal *life* and salvation. *And* when we consider all these awful consequences, which one way or other attend our ministry, we may truly say, *who* [*is*] *sufficient for these things?* Who is worthy to bear such an important charge? Who should undertake it without trembling? Nevertheless though we must acknowledge ourselves unworthy of such a charge, God is pleased to succeed us in the execution of it, as he knows our sincerity in his sight and presence. *For we are not as many, who adulterate the word of God*[b] *by*

unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

15 For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish.

16 To the one we *are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other, the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

17 For we are not as many which corrupt the word of

[a] *Causeth us to triumph.*] Witsius would render θριαμβευοντι, *who triumphs over us*, (compare Col. ii. 15.) and supposes it expresses the joy with which St. Paul reflected on that powerful and sovereign grace which had led him in triumph, who was once so insolent an enemy to the gospel. I rather think the apostle represents himself as triumphing through the Divine power. And as in triumphal processions, especially in the east, fragrant odours and incense were burned near the conquerors; so he seems beautifully to allude to that circumstance, in what he says of the οσμη, *the odour of the gospel*, in the following verses. And he seems farther to allude to the different effects of strong perfumes, to cheer some, and to throw others into violent disorders, according to the different dispositions they are in to receive them; and Ælian observes, that some kind of animals are killed by them, Hist Anim. iii. 7.

[b] *Adulterate the word.*] Καπηλευοντες is a very expressive phrase, and alludes to the practice of those who deal in liquors, which they debase for their own greater gain; and it insinuates in strong terms the base temper and conduct of their false teachers. Bos has finely illustrated the force of this expression in his learned and elegant note on this text. Exer. p. 154, 155.

SECT. IV.

God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

2 Cor. II. 17.

their own base mixtures, and retail it, when formed according to the corrupt taste of their hearers; *but as of* unmingled *sincerity, but as* by the express command *of God, in the presence of God we speak in* the name of *Christ;* delivering every part of our message, as those that know how awful our account is; and how impossible it is to conceal so much as a single thought from that all-penetrating Being, to whom we are shortly to give it up.

2 Cor III. 1. Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some *others,* epistles of commendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you?

2 Cor. III. 1.

And when I say this, *do we again,* as some presume to insinuate, *begin to recommend ourselves,* and one another, [*to you?*] *Or do we need, as* I perceive *some* [*do*] *recommendatory letters to you* from other churches, *or recommendatory* [*letters*] *from you* to others? Truly I

2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:

2

may well say, *you are* yourselves *our epistle,* the best recommendation from God himself, his testimonial, as it were, *written upon your hearts*[c] in the glorious change by our means produced there; and the effects of it are so apparent in your lives, that I may say, ye are *known and read by all men,* who know what you once were, and you now are; and they who consider these things must acknowledge, that such success granted by the co-operation of Divine grace, is as evident a proof of God's gracious presence with us as can well be imagined.

3 *Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in

3

[*Ye,*] whose characters were some of them once so enormous, (1 Cor. vi. 11.) but [*are*] now so amiable and excellent, are indeed *manifest* and apparent, *as the epistle of Christ* which is *ministered by us;* and by you Christ doth, as it were, declare, that he hath been faithfully preached among you by us; an epistle *written not,* as epistles generally are, *with ink, but* by traces drawn *by the Spirit of the* one *living* and true *God,* moving on your hearts, and producing that variety of graces which render many of you so conspicuous and lovely. And the inscription is *not,* (as that

[c] *In your hearts.*] Some copies read *our hearts,* that is, *always remembered and thought of.* But I apprehend, the apostle means, that the change produced, not only in their external conduct, but in their inward temper, was so great, that all who could judge of it by intimate knowledge, (and it is certain that some judgment may be formed,) must own it a great attestation of his ministry. The great enormities in which they were once plunged, (see 1 Cor. vi. 11, &c.) would much illustrate this argument.

SECT. IV.

2 Cor. III. 3.

boasted monument, which did so great an honour to the mission and authority of Moses,) written *in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart;* to which no hand, but that by which the heart was made, could find access, in such a manner as to inscribe these sacred characters there.

tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

4 *Such confidence have we towards God by* Jesus *Christ*, that our ministry shall be effectual in other places, and that the world shall by your means be persuaded of our apostleship.

4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:

5 We say this, *not* as insinuating, *that we are sufficient of ourselves to reckon upon any thing as from ourselves;*[d] we would not insinuate this, or encourage any others to do it; *for* we are upon all occasions ready most thankfully to acknowledge, that all *our sufficiency* [*is*] *from God;* whatever furniture of any kind we have for our work, we humbly ascribe it to him, and from him arise all our expectations of success with this furniture, whatever it be:

5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.

6 From that great and adorable Author of all good, *who also hath made us* his apostles, and others whom he hath sent into the work, *able ministers of the new covenant*, sufficiently qualified to discharge that important trust of proposing this gracious covenant of God, established in Christ, to our fellow-creatures. For we are indeed ministers, *not of the letter, but of the Spirit;*[e] *for* we are enabled to enter into the sense and spirit of the law, and other sacred writings; whereas that Divine volume is to the Jews, but as a heap of letters and characters, which they know not how to read or understand, and yet pride themselves so much in them, that in that sense it may be said, they receive mischief, rather than benefit from their own oracles. Thus *the letter*

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter

[d] *To reckon upon any thing as of ourselves.*] This seems the most exact rendering of λογισασθαι τι ως εξ ἑαυτων. Dr. Whitby renders it, *to reason*, as if the apostle had said, We are unable by any reasoning of our own to bring men to conversion: which gives a fine and just sense, but I think only a part of what the apostle intended. Compare Acts xix. 27; Rom. iv. 3, 6, 11; chap. viii. 18, 36; 1 Cor. iv. 1; in all which the word λογιζομαι has the signification we here assign it, and signifies *to reckon*, or *account*.

[e] *Not of the letter, but of the Spirit.*] To understand this of an allegorical, rather than literal explication of the Old Testament, is very arbitrary and unwarrantable; and I wish no Christian commentators had given encouragement to the Deists to abuse this text in the manner it is well known they have done.

killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

killeth: the unbelieving Jews are undone by their obstinate adherence to it, and more prejudiced against the gospel, than those that never heard of any Divine revelation at all. *But* when taught by *the Spirit* of God, speaking in us, they enter into the spiritual sense and design of the law, then it *giveth life;* it establisheth our faith, quickens our obedience, and becomes a source of happiness in this world and in the next.

SECT. IV.

2 Cor. III. 6.

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY the infinite importance of the gospel-message be deeply impressed on all who preach, and all who hear it. *Life,* or *death,* is in question; eternal life, or everlasting death; and while it is from day to day reviving its thousands, is it not to be feared, that in some places it is, by the righteous judgment of God on hard and impenitent hearts, aggravating the guilt and misery of its ten thousands? How awful is the work of dispensing this gospel! Who can pretend to be *sufficient for such things* as these! Who, that considers the nature and importance of the ministerial work, can undertake, or pursue it, but with *fear and trembling!*

Chap. ii. 15, 16

Yet, *insufficient* as they ought humbly to acknowledge themselves to be, *to reckon upon any thing, as from themselves,* there is a *sufficiency in God,* imparted to faithful ministers; in consequence of which they are often made to triumph in Christ, and borne on, in a holy superiority to all the difficulties of their work, and see their labour not to be in vain in the Lord. Well may that support them, under the discouragements, which, in other instances, they feel, when the fruit of their labours does not immediately appear; yea, when the present state of many under their care is directly contrary to what they could desire; for their *work is still with the Lord,* and they are *a sweet savour to God in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved.* Let them therefore gird up the loins of their mind, and exert themselves with the utmost vigour, rejoicing in this, that God will on the whole be glorified, and they shall on the whole be accepted, and through his abundant grace be amply rewarded. Yea, God will consider, in that day of final recompense, the anguish which they have felt for the souls they have seen perishing under their ministrations, as well as the faithful pains they have bestowed to reclaim them.

Chap. iii. 5. Chap. ii. 14.

15

But as they desire to secure this acceptance; yea, to secure their own salvation, let them never allow themselves, by any foreign mixtures, to *adulterate the word of God;* but let them

SECT. IV.

speak it in its uncorrupted *sincerity, as in the sight and presence of God*, and as those who know it is not their business to devise a message out of their own hearts, but to deliver what they have *received of the Lord.* So may they hope there shall not be wanting those, who, according to the views which the apostle gives us of these Corinthians, shall appear as epistles written by the hand of Christ himself, in attestation of their commission from him. (Chap. iii. 2.)

That ministers may more cheerfully hope for, and expect such an honour, let us all pray, that the Spirit of God may lead them into the true sense and meaning of scripture; that they may not unprofitably amuse themselves and their hearers with vain and 6 cold criticisms on the letter of it, so as to neglect and forget what is most spiritual in its design and meaning; but that they may, under Divine illumination, attain to the mind of the Spirit, and be enabled to make greater proficiency in unfolding and illustrating the important mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and may be to multitudes a *savour of life unto life.* (Chap. ii. 16.)

SECT. V.

The Apostle, farther to recommend the ministry of which he had been speaking, falls into a very pertinent and useful digression concerning the comparative obscurity of the Mosaic law, and the superior glory and permanence of the gospel. 2 Cor. III. 7, *to the end.*

2 CORINTHIANS III. 7.

SECT. V. — 2 Cor. III. 7.

I HAVE just been observing, that the letter of the law, in that sense in which it is maintained by the Jews, killeth in itself; it binds down transgressors under a sentence of death, and by the perverseness of their interpretation, is the occasion of ruin; while the Spirit quickeneth. And let me now direct your thoughts to the argument arising from hence, to prove the greatly superior excellence of the gospel: *for if* the Mosaic law, which was indeed, *the ministration of death,* which was [*contained*] *in* visible *letters,* [*and*] the most excellent part of which was *engraven in* the two tables of *stone,* hewn indeed and prepared by God himself, which Moses brought down from Mount Sinai in his hands, *was attended with* a signal and undeniable *glory, so that the children of Israel could not look directly upon the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance which was* so soon

2 COR. III. 7. BUT if the ministration of death written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was to be done away:

8 How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?

to be abolished in death: *How much more shall* that, which may with so much propriety be called *the ministration of the Spirit, be glorious?* Since the work of the Spirit of God on the heart of a rational being, is so much more important, than any dead characters which could be engraven on insensible stones.

9 For if the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

9 This may be farther apparent, when we consider what I hinted before, concerning the impossibility of obtaining life and salvation by the Mosaic law. *For if* that, which was, in its effects, only *the ministration of condemnation*, pronouncing a sentence of death, in many cases without mercy, and which at last certainly ended in leaving persons under condemnation, as it was incapable of taking away the moral guilt of any one offence; [*was attended with*] so bright *a glory*;[a] *how much more shall* the gospel, which may well be called *the ministration of righteousness, exceed in glory?* as it puts us into so certain a way to obtain justification and life everlasting.

10 For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

10 *For even that which was made glorious* at its first dispensation, that is, the law of Moses, *hath no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth it* by unutterable degrees; so that as the sun swalloweth up the light of the moon and the stars, in like manner is the lustre of former dispensations swallowed up in that of the gospel.

11 For if that which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious.

11 *For if that which was to be* so soon *abolished, was* nevertheless *attended*, as we have seen, *with* some considerable degrees of *glory*, to illustrate its Divine original and authority, *how much more glorious* [*must*] *that* [*be*] *which remaineth* immutable through the remotest ages![b]

[a] *Attended with glory.*] Dr. Whitby has taken a great deal of pains to prove, that there is an intended opposition between the glory, that is, the visible lustre on the countenance of Moses, (compare Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30, where the Seventy use the word δεδόξασται,) with the *glory* which descended on the apostles; (Acts ii. 3, 4.) and considers each as an emblem of the dispensation to be introduced, but with incomparable advantage on the side of the gospel. But laboured as this interpretation is, I cannot acquiesce in what is singular in it; and it had been obvious to have objected to verse 11, that the cloven tongues of fire left no such lasting lustre on the *face* of the apostles as on that of Moses.

[b] *If that which was to be, &c.*] Mr. Hallet would render it, "if that which "was done away, was done away by "glory, how much more doth that "which remaineth, remain in glory." But I think this must appear harsh to

SECT. V. 2 Cor. III. 12.

This is the glorious ministry in which we are engaged; and it brings along with it the sublimest sentiments and the noblest views. *Having therefore this hope* and confidence, it is no wonder that *we use great liberty of address,* 13 when we are speaking to you; *And* [*are*] *not* herein concealed, *as Moses,* [*who*] *put a veil upon his face,* (compare Exod. xxxiv. 33,[c]) wherein he was a kind of type and figure of his own dispensation; so *that* he might seem thereby to intimate, that *the children of Israel could not directly look to the end of that* law *which* he brought, and which *was,* as I observed before, 14 *to be abolished;*[d] *But* on the contrary, *their understandings are* evidently *blinded, for until this day the same veil continues* upon the law, or rather upon their own hearts, and is still *unremoved during the reading of the Old Testament;* which contains such distinct prophecies of Christ, and such lively descriptions of him, that one would imagine it impossible that he should not be immediately acknowledged and adored by all that profess to believe its Divine authority: *which* [*veil*] *is taken away in* those that receive *Christ,* who have in him the true substance of those shadows, and the great end of 15 its most important prophesies. *But* as to the unbelieving Jews, as I said before, *the veil* which they wear in their synagogues, too aptly represents that which *is upon their heart when Moses is read, even to this day* in their hearing; in consequence of which they can no more see the mind of Moses, than their fathers could see 16 his face. *But* it shall not always be so; the house of Israel is intitled to a variety of most excellent promises, relating to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom; and as when Moses went in to the Lord, he laid aside his veil, so *when it,* that is, the people of Israel, *shall turn unto the*

12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.

13 And not as Moses *which* put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away, in the reading of the Old Testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ.

15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

16 Nevertheless, when it shall turn to

every one that examines the original; διὰ δόξης, is literally *by glory,* and so may signify, *introduced* by it, or *attended* with it, or *confirmed* by it; and in either of these senses may well be applied to the *shining* of the *face* of Moses.

[c] *And are not,* &c.] All that follows from hence to the beginning of the 18th verse may be included in a parenthesis.

[d] *Which was to be abolished.*] Such an oblique manner of speaking on this subject, makes the argument from these words peculiarly striking. It is taken for granted, as a thing certainly known, and quite indisputable, that the Mosaic dispensation was to be abolished.

SECT. V.

2 Cor. III. 16.

the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

Lord, when the blessed period appointed for their general conversion shall come, *the veil shall be taken away*, and the genuine sense of the sacred oracles shall break in upon their minds with an irresistible light. 17 *Now the Lord* Jesus Christ *is that Spirit* of the law of which I spake before; to whom the letter of it was intended to lead the Jews; and it is the office of the Spirit of God, as the great Agent in his kingdom, to direct the minds of men to it. *And* let him be universally sought in this view; for *where the Spirit of the Lord* [*is*,] *there* [*is*] *liberty*: a more liberal and filial disposition, to which under the influence and operation of the Spirit, the gospel brings those who were subject to bondage, under the imperfect dispensation of Moses. 18 *And* in consequence of the liberty, enjoyed by virtue of the gracious œconomy, *we all*, who have been so happy as suitably to welcome it, *with unveiled face* attentively *beholding as by a glass*[e] or mirror, *the glory of the Lord*[f] reflected from his word, *are transformed into* something of *the same* resplendent *image* of the blessed Redeemer, whose shining face we there see; and the more stedfastly we behold this illustrious and amiable form, the more we do partake of it, proceeding gradually *from glory to glory*. And all this is *as* proceeding *from the Lord the Spirit*[g]; for as the Lord Jesus Christ is the Spirit of the law, so the Divine Spirit, under his direction and influences, is the cause of this noble and Divine effect.

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.

[e] *Beholding as by a glass.*] Some would render κατοπτριζομενοι, *reflecting as from a glass*. But Elsner and Bos, have abundantly proved, what indeed is evident to all versed in the language, that it has the signification here assigned; and indeed the other interpretation would obscure and perplex the sense.

[f] *Beholding—the glory of the Lord.*] Here is one of the most beautiful contrasts that can be imagined. Moses saw the *Shechinah*, and it rendered his face resplendent, so that he covered it with a veil, the Jews not being able to bear the reflected light: we behold Christ, as in the *glass* of his *word*, and, (as the reflection of a very *luminous* object from a mirror, gilds the face on which the reverberated rays fall,) our faces shine too; and we veil them not, but diffuse the lustre, which, as we discover more and more of his glories in the gospel, is continually increasing.

[g] *By the Lord the Spirit.*] As the order of the Greek words is unusual, not πνευματος τȣ κυριȣ, but κυριȣ πνευματος, Dr. Whitby would render it *by the Lord of the Spirit*, that is, by Christ, in whom the Spirit dwells, and by whom it is communicated according to his sovereign will. But the paraphrase unites two senses, each I think more natural, though which of the two was chiefly intended, I cannot absolutely determine.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. V. STILL doth this glorious glass of the gospel stand full in our view, from which the lustre of the Redeemer's countenance is reflected. Let us daily behold his image there, and contem-
Verse 18 plate it with an attentive eye, as those who are solicitous, that we may wear some of those rays; yea, that we may wear them with still increasing lustre; that we *may be transformed from glory to glory*, and reflecting those rays, *shine as lights in the world*.

Let us endeavour to raise our minds to this laudable temper, by frequently reflecting on the excellence of the Christian dispen-
7, 8 sation, as a *dispensation of the Spirit and of life;* whereas the law was the *ministration of death;* and while, from the glory attending the law, we infer, with the apostle, the super-eminent glory of the gospel, let us learn also the superior obligation it brings us under, to regard and obey it, and the proportionably
11 greater danger of despising it. The law of Moses was soon to be abolished; the gospel still remains, and shall remain to the end of time. Let us pray for its prosperity, and do our utmost to promote it. And let us earnestly plead with God, that, whereas
14 there is now *a veil upon the face of the Jews even unto this day*, when the sacred records *are read among them*, they may *turn un-*
16 *to the Lord, and find the veil taken away:* that so by the conversion of Israel as a nation, there may be a glorious accession of evidence to Christianity; and that the Jews themselves may be happy in the blessing of him whom their fathers crucified, and whom they continue contemptuously to reject.

Let the ministers of the gospel, while defending so divine a cause, and enforcing so important a message, use all becoming
12 plainness of speech; and may all Christians know more of that
17 *liberty which the Spirit of the Lord gives*, that God may in all things be glorified, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

SECT. VI.

The apostle declares his courage, and disclaims all sinister views and all distrust of success, in pursuing the glorious ministry he had described: being persuaded, that such a gospel could not be rejected, but in consequence of the most fatal prejudices. 2 Cor. IV. 1—6.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 1.

SUCH are the distinguished glories of the gospel-dispensation, and its effects on the hearts of those who sincerely embrace it. And *there-*

2 COR. IV. 1.

THEREFORE,

SECT. VI.

2 Cor. IV. 1.

ing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

fore having been entrusted with such a ministration, as we have obtained mercy [*of God*] to be thus honoured, *we faint not* under any of those difficulties we are called out to encounter; nor in any degree desist from our glorious enterprise.[a]

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2 *But we have renounced*, and set at defiance *the hidden things of shame;*[b] in which the priests of Paganism deal so much, in order to impose on the people over whom they preside, practising in their mysteries so many impure, and so many foolish rites. We need not any of their artifices; *not walking in craftiness*, as some would insinuate that we do, *nor deceitfully corrupting* and disguising *the word of God; but by the manifestation of the* genuine and unsophisticated *truth, recommending ourselves to every man's conscience*, we steadily and constantly act, as *in the* all-penetrating *sight of God;* and therefore are willing, that all the world should know what the arts and mysteries of our ministry are.

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

3 *But if our gospel*, after such open and generous conduct on our side, *be* still *under a veil too*,[c] as the law is with respect to so many; *it is veiled to those that are perishing;* they must be very bad men, and in a very dangerous state, who hearing it preached as it is by us, cannot enter into the main design and spirit of it, and are not inwardly engaged to reverence it.

4 In whom the god of this world

4 *Among whom* undoubtedly, that is, in the number of such unhappy wretches [*are*] all [*they*] *whose unbelieving minds* Satan, who herein acts as *the god of this world*,[d] whose subjects the children

[a] Desist from our glorious enterprise.] Εκκακειν naturally expresses the *drawing back* from some strenuous undertaking, in what we often call a dastardly manner, on account of some difficulties attending it.

[b] *Renounced the hidden things of shame.*] Dr. Whitby understands this of *lewd practices;* but the opposition between this clause and the following, seems much more to favour the paraphrase; though to be sure the phrase may extend to all *dishonest artifices* of false *teachers*. The word απειπαμεθα, which we render *renounce*, does not imply they ever had any thing to do with these things; but the words "*set them at defiance*," seem still more literally to express the original.

[c] *If our gospel be under a veil too.*] Ει δε και εϛι κεκαλυμμενον το ευαγγελιον ἡμων, is most literally rendered thus: and it has so evident a reference to what was said above, of the *veil* on the faces of the Jews, that it seems by all means expedient to translate it thus, rather than hid.—This text is justly urged by Dr. Scott, (Christian Life, Vol. V. 320.) as a proof of the perspicuity of the apostle's writings in all matters of importance to our salvation.

[d] *The god of this world.*] That several

SECT. VI.

2 Cor. IV. 4.

of this world are, *hath blinded* by its dazzling vanities and allurements, *lest the lustre of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of* the invisible *God* in all his perfections and glories, *should beam forth upon them,* and should pain, or rather awaken, those weak minds, darkened by so many gross and unhappy prejudices, and 5 slumbering to their everlasting destruction. But such as I have before described, is our conduct, however perversely it may be mistaken, or misrepresented. *For we preach not ourselves ;*[e] we aim not at exalting our own authority, at extending our reputation, or securing to ourselves any secular advantage; *but,* renouncing all such views, and claims, and desires, we preach *Christ Jesus,* as *the* supreme *Lord* of his church; *and,* instead of setting ourselves up for your masters, we declare *ourselves* to be *your servants for the sake of Jesus;* and are willing, out of regard to you, and above all out of duty to him, to stoop to the humblest offices of love, by which we may be serviceable to you in your most im-6 portant interests. And it is no wonder, that we are thus disposed, considering the view of things which God hath given us by his grace ; *for God, who* by his powerful word, in the first creation of this world, *commanded the light* instantaneously *to shine out of* that *darkness* which covered the whole face of the deep, (Gen. i. 5.) *hath* also *shined into our* once prejudiced and benighted *hearts,* and particularly into mine, by the internal operation of his blessed spirit, [*to impart*] *the lustre of the knowledge of God's glory,*[f] discovered, as we before observed, *in the*

hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

ancient Christian writers should interpret this of *God the Father,* is one of the most amazing things I have met with. See Dr. Whitby in loc. and Dr. Edwards, Exercit. p. 291. I doubt not but Satan is intended, and it could be proved, as has been intimated, that this malignant spirit was so early called by the Jews סמאל, *the god who blinds,* I should think it a beautiful illustration.

[e] *Preach not ourselves.*] Grotius explains it thus, "we do not preach that "we are *lords,* but that Christ is so;" and this is certainly comprehended. But I think the phrase may well be taken in the larger extent, expressed in the paraphrase. To *preach themselves,* may signify their making *themselves,* in any view, *the end of their preaching ;* as preaching Jesus, a phrase often used, may signify preaching, so as to direct men's eyes to him.

[f] *To impart the lustre of the knowledge of God's glory.*] Γνωσεως της δοξης τȣ Θεȣ, may very well signify the *glorious knowledge of God ;* but the following words determined me to the more literal translation, as it is more proper to speak of the glory, than of the knowledge of God, as in, or upon the face of Christ. Some would render προς φωτισμον, according, or in *proportion* to, that *lustre.*

SECT. VI.

face of our Lord *Jesus Christ*,[g] from thence reflected upon us, and from us to you, for the important purposes of your sanctification and salvation.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1 LET all who are honoured with the ministry of the gospel, learn from the apostle, courage and fidelity; remembering they are continually in the sight and presence of God. Let them therefore renounce with abhorrence, that craft which so many who have called themselves Christian priests, have studied; and 2 labour to govern their whole conduct by such apparent principles of integrity and honour, that they may *commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

This end will be much promoted, if they learn to lay aside 5 all sinister views of interest and ambition, of human applause, or a dominion over men's consciences; and putting on that humble character so amiably illustrated in the apostle Paul's writings, every where, with all loyal affection preach Christ as the great Lord and Head of the church; and declare and approve themselves the willing *servants of souls for his sake.* So humbling themselves, they will be exalted in the eyes of God and man; and will reap those heart-felt pleasures now, and those honours, emoluments, and delights hereafter, which will infinitely more than indemnify them for all they may resign; and exceed not only the low apprehensions of the servants of mammon, in Christ's livery, but their own most elevated conceptions.

Let every reader seriously examine himself as to the knowledge he has of this gospel, and the degree in which he has felt a sense of its glory and excellence upon his heart; solemnly considering that if the lustre and efficacy of the gospel be 3 hidden from him, it is a sad sign, that he is himself a lost creature, and is like to be lost to God and happiness for ever; he is 4 the captive of Satan, blinded by him as the god of this world, and in the probable way to be led on to unseen, but irretrievable destruction. Dreadful situation! which might indeed occasion absolute despair, were it not for the views which the gospel gives us, of that God, *who in the beginning* of the creation 6 *commanded the light to shine out of darkness*; who can yet say, *Let there be light, and there shall be light* in the most benighted

[g] *In the face of Jesus Christ.*] Some would render προσωπῳ *person*; but it so evidently signifies *face* in the context, (chap. iii. 13, 18.) that it seemed much better to render it *face*; though the glory here said to be reflected from his face, is undoubtedly that which is manifested in his *person*, in the union of *Deity* with *humanity*, and all the wonderful things he has done and suffered in consequence of it.

SECT. VI.

soul, and the *lustre of the glorious knowledge of God in the person of Christ shall beam forth.* Let this Divine interposition be earnestly implored; and O, that it may be imparted, before the blinded captives be consigned to eternal ruin, *to blackness of darkness for ever!*

SECT. VII.

The Apostle freely acknowledges his own infirmities: but glories in the strength communicated to him from God, as an effectual support under the extremest trials: over which he triumphs in the language of the strongest faith. 2 Cor. IV. 7—15.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 7.

SECT. VII. 2 Cor. IV. 7.

I HAVE spoken to you of the excellence of the gospel, representing it as a most invaluable treasure; and indeed it is so rich a blessing, that the highest angel in heaven, might think it an honour to be employed in dispensing it. *But* such is the conduct of Providence in this respect, that *we have this* invaluable *treasure in earthen vessels:* feeble creatures who dwell in mortal bodies, and are surrounded with numberless infirmities, are employed in dispensing it to us; *that* so *the excellency of the power*, by which its great and important ends are answered, *may* appear to *be of God, and not of us;* who are so far from being able to add efficacy to our own labours, that it is wonderful how we 8 are enabled even to sustain them. [*We are*] indeed *in every respect*[a] greatly *afflicted;*[b] *but* through the Divine care over us, we are *not utterly overpressed*[c] with the weight and variety of our trials: we are often *brought into dubious circumstances; but* blessed be God, we are *not* 9 *in despair;* [*We are*] continually *persecuted* by men, *but* we are *not forsaken* of God; we are

2 COR. IV. 7. BUT we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast

[a] *In every respect we are afflicted,* &c.] This section may seem a digression; but nothing could be more pertinent to the apostle's grand purpose. He aimed at recovering the affections of these Corinthians, which were much alienated from him; for this purpose he freely opens his heart towards them, and tenderly represents the many and grievous pressures and hardships to which love to souls, and to theirs among the rest, exposed him. This I take to be the true key to this beautiful and pathetic passage.

[b] *We are afflicted.*] I apprehend the apostle here to speak with some peculiar regard to his own case; yet not so as to exclude that of his brethren, which undoubtedly did very much resemble it. Compare 1 Cor. iv. 9.

[c] *Not utterly over-pressed.*] The word στενοχωρουμενοι properly signifies, *crushed in a strait passage.*

SECT. VII.

2 Cor. IV. 10.

down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live, are alway also delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written I believed, and therefore have I

thrown down by our enemies, *yet* we are *not* entirely *destroyed* by them; but animated from on high, we spring up again, and renew the combat with increasing vigour. We are *always bearing about* with us *in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus* Christ; so that the cruelties which were exercised in putting him to death, seem to be acted over again upon us, by the rage of the enemy; yet all this is in effect, not that an immediate period should be put to our life and ministry, as they desire, but *that the life also of Jesus*, now triumphant above all hostile power, *may be* more evidently *manifested in* the preservation of this *our* feeble *body*, which enemies, so many and mighty, are continually endeavouring to destroy. 11 *For we who live*, those of us, the apostles and ministers of Christ, who still survive, *are continually delivered over to death for the sake of* the Lord *Jesus*, and as it were, every day led out to a new martyrdom in his cause; but so many new and unexpected deliverances arise, that it seems as if these dangers were permitted on purpose, *that*, as I said before, *the life also* and power *of* the blessed *Jesus* our Divine Saviour, *may be manifested* and demonstrated, *in* supporting *our mortal* and feeble *flesh* in the midst of all these assaults, and perpetuating our lives from year to year through so many successive dangers, which await us wherever we come. 12 *So that* on the whole I may say, that *death worketh* continually to glorify his name *in us, but life in you;* while you are called to live for his honour, we may be said to serve our Redeemer by bearing for his sake repeated deaths.

13 But *we* endure it all with resolution and cheerfulness, *having the same spirit of faith*, by which good men of old were animated, in their most active labours, and most painful sufferings; *according to what is written*, (Psal. cxvi. 10.) *I have believed, and therefore have I spoken*[d];

[d] *I have believed, and therefore have I spoken.*] As for the quotation here, some think there is an allusion to the confidence which David expresses in the preceding words, of *walking before the Lord in the land of the living*; as if the apostle had intended to say, we also shall in a nobler sense do it. Mr. Pierce supposes the *Spirit of faith*, here spoken of, is the Spirit of Jesus, which enabled him through faith in God to preach that doctrine which he knew would provoke the rage

SECT. VII.

2 Cor. IV. 13.

we also cordially *believe* the certain truth of what we teach, *and therefore* go on to *speak* our important message, whatever may be the consequence, supported by this inward consciousness of our integrity, and animated by a powerful sense of duty towards God, and the hope of the most glorious rewards from his bountiful grace.

spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Those hopes rise to complete and everlasting happiness; which we continually pursue, as *knowing that* if we persevere in that service with which he hath honoured us, *he who raised up the Lord Jesus* Christ from the dead by his almighty power, *will also raise us up by Jesus*, whom he will send at the last day, commissioned to accomplish this great work; *and* that then he *will present [us] with you*, before the presence of his glory with exceeding great joy, in each other, and in him; and will introduce us to that heavenly kingdom, to the prospects of which he hath called us by that gospel which we have preached, and which you have believed.

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

15 *For all* these great *things [are]* prepared, not merely on our account, but *for your sakes, that the overflowing grace* being complete in all its diffusive extent, and exalted degrees, *might abound by the thanksgiving of many*, even of countless multitudes who shall share for ever in it, *to the glory of God*, the great original and end of all.

15 For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God.

IMPROVEMENT.

Let us adore the wisdom and goodness of God, in sending us the *gospel-treasure in earthen vessels*, in employing our fellow-mortals, rather than angels, under the character of his messengers to us; by which means we are taught more to depend on God for that efficacy of power that renders them successful; to acknowledge his hand in animating and preserving them, and are kept in such an exercise of faith, as is in this present world most honourable to God, and most profitable to us. Let

of a wicked world, so as to end in his death, and he undertakes to prove in his third Dissertation, that the cxvith psalm, in its original sense, is to be understood as spoken by the Psalmist in the person of the Messiah. But I see no necessity for urging this. The simpler sense of the passage, as it stands in the psalm, is, "Though I have been in very great "affliction, and sometimes almost de-"pressed, yet *faith* in God hath support-"ed me, and put this song of praise in-"to my mouth." In this sense of the words nothing could be more natural than for St. Paul to adopt them.

the mortality of ministers be suitably remembered, by themselves and others, and improved to the best purposes; and let us take care that we do not think the less honourably of the treasure, on account of the weakness of these vessels in which the great Proprietor has thought fit to lodge it.

SECT. VII.

Let it encourage them, who are struggling with the difficulties of that arduous and important work, to think on those refreshments which the apostles experienced; in consequence of which, though afflicted, they were not depressed, and though persecuted, appeared not to be forsaken; but could boast, that the *support of their lives*, amidst so many pressing dangers, was a *demonstration of the life of Christ.* We may indeed all say this, with respect to the support of the spiritual life, in the midst of so many difficulties. *Having obtained help from him, we continue until this day*; and it is because *he lives, that we live also.* Confiding therefore in him, let us exert ourselves vigorously in this holy warfare to which we are called; and strenuously endeavour to maintain our ground against all the enemies who press hard to overbear and destroy us.

Verse 8, 2, 11

And that we may be thus animated, let us labour to engrave on our hearts a more lively and assured belief of the great and important things of which we speak, and hear; and that not only in the general, but in particular instances. Let us labour to feel at once their evidence, and their energy; having the same spirit of faith which wrought in the apostles and prophets, and engaged them to discharge their office with such distinguished fidelity, fervour and zeal. Especially let us maintain such believing apprehensions of this great and comprehensive truth, *that God hath raised up Christ Jesus from the dead*, and that he will by *the same power also raise up his faithful ministers and servants*, who firmly retain that glorious gospel; and, as those discoveries are made for their sakes, that they may obtain salvation by him, and that God may be glorified in their united and everlasting praises, let us daily set before our eyes, this risen and triumphant Redeemer, and look forward to that glorious appearance of his, when he shall come to be *admired in his saints*, and to be farther extolled and *glorified, in all them who believe.* Amen.

13

14

SECT. VIII.

The Apostle describes the glorious hopes, which he had beyond the grave, as his great support and ground of triumph, under all those trials which he had been mentioning before; and en-

deavours to animate others to fidelity and zeal by that description. 2 Cor. IV. 16, *to the end,* Chap. V. 1—10.

2 CORINTHIANS IV. 16.

SECT. VIII.

2 Cor IV. 16.

WE have been speaking of the great design of God, in causing his gospel to be revealed to the children of men, that the thanksgivings of many may redound to his own glory; and *on this account we faint not* under any of the present pressures, nor suffer ourselves to be borne down by the assaults of our enemies; *but* on the contrary, *if our outer man perishes, yet* the *inner* man *is daily renewed:* the soul gathers new strength, as the body grows weaker and weaker, and we feel our dissolution approaching;

17 which may well be the case. *For* we have the firmest assurance, that *this momentary lightness of our affliction*, which passes off so fast, and leaves so little impression, that it may justly be spoken of as levity itself, *is working out for us a far more exceeding* [*and*] *eternal weight of glory*,[a] the most solid, substantial, and lasting felicity, the exalted degrees of which, none of the boldest figures of speech can paint, nor any stretch of

18 human thought distinctly conceive. And we may assuredly promise ourselves, that this shall be the blessed end of all, *while we are* conscious that we are *not aiming*[b] *at the things which are visible;* are not endeavouring to secure to ourselves any secular advantages of one kind or another; *but at those which are invisible.* And however vain and visionary such views may seem to the world about us, and we may be despised for attending to them, we have full satisfaction in our own minds, that we are acting the wisest part, in such a choice and preference;

2 COR. IV. 16.

FOR which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the

[a] *A far more exceeding,* &c.] This sentence is one of the most emphatical in all St. Paul's writings; in which (as Dr. Grosvenor well expresses it,) he speaks as much like an orator as an apostle. The lightness of the trial is expressed by το ελαφρον της θλιψεως, the *lightness of our affliction;* as if he had said, it is even *levity itself* in such a comparison. On the other hand, the καθ' υπερβολην εις υπερβολην, is (says Mr. Blackwall) infinitely emphatical, and cannot be expressed by any translation. It signifies, that all hyperboles fall short of describing that weighty eternal glory, so solid and lasting, that you may pass from one hyperbole to another, and yet when you have gained the last, are infinitely below it. Blackw. Sacr. Clas. Vol. I. p. 332.

[b] *Are not aiming,* &c.] This σκοπειν exactly signifies; and our English word *scope* or mark aimed at, is derived from the same Greek theme.

SECT. VIII.

2 Cor. IV. 18.

things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen, *are* eternal.

for the things which are visible, and in that respect may seem to have the advantage of others, [*are*] *temporary* and transient; *but those which are invisible*, [*are*] *eternal*, and therefore suitable to the duration of that immortal soul which God hath given us, and in the felicity of which our true happiness must consist.

2 Cor. V. 1.

2 Cor. V. 1. For we know, that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Nor is this an uncertain, or very distant hope; *for we know* assuredly, that *if our earthly house of* [*this*] *tabernacle were dissolved*, if this mortal body constituted of dust, were mouldered back to dust again; or if our zeal for the service of the gospel should bring on martyrdom, which should destroy it before its time; *we have*, and should immediately enter on, *a building of* which *God* is the great Architect and Donor; *an house not made with* mortal *hands*,[c] nor to be compared with the most magnificent structure they ever raised exceeding them all in its lustre, as much as its duration; though that duration be *eternal in the* regions of the *heavens*, far above either violence or decay.

2 For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3 If so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked.

4 For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed,

And in this view, 2 *we groan* through that intenseness of soul with which we are *earnestly* and perpetually *desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven*; Since *being so clothed upon, we shall* 3 *not be found naked* and exposed to any evil and inconvenience, how entirely soever we may be stripped of every thing we can call our own, here below. And *moreover, we who are* yet *in* 4 [*this*] *tabernacle do groan*, not only with those longings after a blessed immortality, but also *being burdened* with the present weight of many infirmities, and many calamities: for which cause *nevertheless we would not be unclothed*, or stripped of the body; for that is what we cannot consider, as in itself desirable; *but* ra-

[c] *Not made with hands*, &c.] Whether we consider this divine building, as particularly signifying *the body after the resurrection*, in which sense Dr. Whitby takes it; or any *vehicle* in which the soul may be clothed during the intermediate state, considerable difficulties will arise. I am therefore inclinable, rather to take it in a more general view, as referring to the *whole* provision God has made for the future happiness of his people, and which Christ represents as *his Father's house, in which there are many mansions.* *To be clothed upon with an house*, is a very strong *figure*; which yet it is evident the apostle uses in the next verse; having in his thoughts the glory which each should wear, instead of being clothed, as now, with that mortal flesh which he calls a *tabernacle*, as it is so mean, inconvenient, and precarious an abode.

SECT. VIII.

2 Cor. V. 4.

ther, if it might be referred to our own choice, *clothed upon* immediately, with a glory like that which shall invest the saints after the resurrection; *that* so *what is mortal*, corruptible, and obnoxious to these disorders, burdens, and sorrows, *may* all *be* so absorbed and *swallowed up by life*; as if it were annihilated by that Divine vigour and energy which shall then exert itself in and upon us.[d]

but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

5 *Now he who hath wrought us to this very thing*, to these noble views and sublime desires, [*is*] *God*;[e] *who hath also given us the earnest of his Spirit*, as the pledge of better, even of eternal 6 blessings. *Therefore*, under the influences of this Divine Spirit, [*we are*] *always courageous* in the midst of surrounding danger; and whatever natural aversion we have to death, are ready to brave its terrors, in the views of that immediate happiness which lieth before us: *knowing, that while we are sojourning in the body*,[f] *we are*, as it were, *in a state of exile from the Lord* Jesus Christ, in the enjoyment of whom our 7 chief happiness consists: *For we* now *walk* and conduct ourselves in the whole course of life, *by* the *faith* of objects, as yet unseen; and *not by* the *sight* of those glories, or by a regard 8 to those things which we can see. *We are courageous* therefore [*I say*] in these delightful views, *and think with complacency, of being rather absent from the body, and* banished from all its pleasures and enjoyments on condition of being, as we know we shall be *present with the Lord*,[g] and dwelling as those who

5 For he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing, *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

6 Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

[d] *That mortality may be*, &c.] The expression in these and the following verses, is not perfectly distinct; but the meaning seems to be this: "that though "it appeared most desirable of all to "pass to glory without dying, yet a "state in which mortality should be "swallowed up by life, was at all events "*desirable*; and an *absence from the body* "to be, not only submitted to, but *wished*, in a view of being so *present with* "*the Lord*, as even in the intermediate "state they expected to be."

[e] *He who hath wrought us to this very thing, is God.*] Mr. Howe observes, that this is a most emphatical manner of speaking; not only asserting that God is the author of it, but ascribing Deity to the author; as if he had said, "none "but God could have raised us to such "a temper." Howe's Works, Vol. I. p. 680.

[f] *Are sojourning in the body.*] So ἐνδημοῦντες here properly signifies; and it is, as Dr. Clark observes, wrong to render it, *while at home in the body*; since it is the apostle's design to intimate, that this is not our home.

[g] *Present with the Lord.*] From this text Mr. Boyse argues not only against the *sleep* of the soul during the intermediate state; but that saints, when departed from our world, go into the highest heaven; where they *dwell* with Christ.

9 Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.

are at home with him. *Therefore we make it the height of our ambition*,[h] *that whether present* in the body, *or absent* from it, *we may be well-pleasing to him*, and receive the tokens of his acceptance and favour.

2 Cor. V. 9.

10 For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things *done* in his body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

10 This is our concern, and it ought to be the concern of all; *for we must all*, without any exception, whatever our station in life may have been, *be manifest before the tribunal of Christ;* our inmost soul must there be displayed, and all the most secret springs of our actions laid open, *that every one may* then *receive*, in that final distribution of happiness and misery, *according to what he hath done in the body, whether good or evil;* in full proportion to his actions, and the principles from which the Searcher of hearts knows them to have arisen.

IMPROVEMENT.

BEHOLD the great lesson which as Christians we have to learn, and which is of such efficacy, that if we thoroughly master it, all the other parts of our duty will become easy and delightful—to *look at the things which are unseen*, rather than at those *which are seen!* And what can be so reasonable, as that eternal objects should employ the thoughts of immortal beings, rather than those which they must soon survive? Let all our souls be directed to them. Let us contemplate the feeble structure of this earthly tabernacle, which gives us so many tokens of its nearly approaching dissolution: this tabernacle, in which we groan under such a variety of burdens; and let us comfort ourselves with the prospect of speedy deliverance; that so while the *outer man perisheth, the inner may be renewed day by day*. What though we have death before us in a certain prospect, and know we must soon be absent from the body? If we are true Christians, we have the most express assurance, not only that the time will come, when we shall inhabit *a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;* but that we shall immediately be present with the Lord, with that blessed Redeemer, whom having not seen we love. How much more shall we love him, how much more shall we rejoice in him, when we are blessed with his presence, and behold his glory!

Verse 18. Chap. V. 1. 14. Chap. IV. 16. 1. 6.

While we have this consciousness, let us be always confident

and are not as some have supposed, in a place where they have only . transient sight of him on some extraordinary occasions. Boyse's Four Last Things, p. 592

[h] *We make it the height of our ambition.*] This φιλοτιμουμεθα plainly imports; and it is flat to translate it, *we labour.*

SECT. VIII. and courageous, and rejoice in afflictions and mortality; since this light and momentary affliction hath so happy an influence upon a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and death will be the consummation of our wishes. Let this then be our constant care, to walk by faith and not by sight; having this ever for the glorious object of our ambition, that *whether present or absent, we may be accepted of the Lord.* May God work us up to this self-same thing; and may the operation of his grace upon our souls for that purpose, be always acknowledged with the humblest gratitude, and its farther communications sought with the most earnest importunity. Then shall we not dread the tribunal of Christ, before which we are so certainly to appear, and be made manifest; knowing that our integrity will be approved, and that those works of faith and labours of love, which shall then be commemorated, will meet with gracious acceptance, and most munificent rewards.

Chap. IV. 17. Chap. V. 7. 9 5 10

SECT. IX.

Touching again upon the zeal with which he prosecuted the gospel-ministry, the Apostle makes a kind of apology for it, by pleading the irresistible engagements of a Redeemer's love, and the infinite importance of that message of reconciliation, with which he was charged; and which, while he recounts, he prosecutes in a pathetic address to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. V. 11, *to the end.* Chap. VI. 1, 2.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 11.

SECT. IX. 2 Cor. V. 11.

I HAVE now touched upon a consideration, which animates us to that zeal in our ministrations, with which many are so much surprised, and some not a little displeased. We often reflect how near the solemn time is advancing, when we, and our hearers, shall appear before the tribunal of Christ; and *knowing therefore the terror of the Lord,* the strict judgment which must then pass on all impenitent sinners, *we,* for their sake, and for our own, labour to our utmost, to *persuade men* to take all necessary methods for escaping it. *But as we are made manifest to God, and* think of it with unutterable pleasure that he knows the integrity of our hearts, in prosecuting the work he hath assigned us, *I hope also we are manifest to your consciences,* and that I have already given, and shall continue to give, such proofs of the simplicity of

2 COR. V. 11.

KNOWING therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

my views and uprightness of my conduct, that you will not be able to harbour any suspicion concerning it.

SECT. IX.

2 Cor. V. 12.

12 For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance, and not in heart.

I say these things freely; *for we do not*, after the modesty and humility with which we have behaved hitherto, now begin to applaud ourselves, or *recommend ourselves again unto you*[a]; as some have very unjustly charged us with doing in some former instances; *but we are giving you occasion of* rejoicing, and *boasting on our account*, as you have indeed cause to do: and are suggesting what may be sufficient, *that ye may have something to* [*answer*] *those who glory in appearance, and not in heart*; for that, I am persuaded, is the case with some of your opposing teachers, whose consciences must surely recoil upon them, and condemn them, while they pretend to vie with us in the discharge of the Christian ministry, and would challenge your regards in preference to us.

13 For whether we be besides ourselves *it is* to God; or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause.

For if, as some injuriously insinuate, *we be transported beyond ourselves*[b], and the due exercise of sober reason, [*it is*] *to God*; a zeal for his glory that animates us; *or if we be sober*, as we hope you cannot but acknowledge us to be, [*it is*] *for your sakes*, that we take so much serious pains in the prosecution of a work in which your highest interest is concerned. On the whole, love to God, and benevolence to man, are the grand principles by which we are actuated; and we cannot be cold and unaffected, while we have such grand and noble subjects before us as those which we handle among you,

[a] *We do not recommend ourselves again unto you.*] It appears from hence, and from the beginning of the third chapter, that the Corinthians were ready to misrepresent the care St. Paul took to vindicate himself, as *pride* and *vain glory*. On the other hand they would have interpreted his *silence* as the effect of *guilt and confusion*. He therefore plainly, and very properly tells them, that he said this only in his own necessary defence, and to furnish his friends with an answer to those whose consciences condemned them, while they endeavoured to asperse him.

[b] *Transported beyond ourselves.*] Mr. Locke thinks, from comparing chap. xi. 1, 16, 21; chap. xii. 6, 11; that the Corinthians censured St. Paul as a fool or a madman, for what he said in commendation of himself; and then the meaning is, "you say, I am distracted "for my present conduct; but this is "between God and myself. I am sure "you Corinthians ought not to say it; "for all my sober thoughts and most "painful labours are for you." But I apprehend on the whole, that the divided clauses are to be taken in such an united view, as to give the sense with which the paraphrase concludes; that it was *piety* to God, and *charity* to them, which wrought up the apostle's mind to that transport which some were so ready to censure; and that a lively view of the *love of Christ* produced such warm impressions of both.

SECT. IX.

2 Cor. v. 14.

to awaken our piety and our charity. *For the love of Christ*, so illustriously displayed in that redemption he hath wrought, *constraineth us*; it *bears us away*[c] like a strong and resistless torrent; *while we thus judge*, and in our calmest and most rational moments, draw it as a certain consequence, from the important principles, which we assuredly know to be true, *that if one*, even Christ, *died for* the redemption and salvation of *all* who should sincerely believe in him, and obey him, *then were all dead;* for had not all, even the very best of men, been in a state of condemnation and death, there would have been 15 no need of his dying for them. *And* now we know, that *he died for all, that they who live* only in consequence of his dying love, *should not henceforth*, from this remarkable period and æra of their lives (whatever they have formerly done) *live to themselves*, so as to make their own will their rule, or to seek any interest of their own, distinct from his; *but* that they should all agree, that they will live *to* the honour, glory, and interest, of *him who died for them; and* when he *rose again* from the dead, retained the same affection for them, and is continually improving his recovered life for their 16 security and happiness. *So that* on the whole, *we from this time* forward *know not any man after the flesh;* we have no longer any partial regard for any, on account of their being Jews by birth, or religion, or as to the aspect which their friendship for us may have on our secular interest; *and if we have known Christ after the flesh*, and governed ourselves by any carnal expectations from the Messiah, as a temporal prince, who should render our nation the terror of the whole world, and raise us to universal monarchy, *henceforth we know* [*him*] in these views *no more*, but entertain quite different 17 sentiments concerning him. And thus it will be with others, who enter truly into the genius of the gospel; *so that if any man* [*be*] really *in Christ* Jesus, if he have a vital and prevailing faith in him, [*there is*] *a new creation*, in the heart

14 For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

15 And that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we *him* no more.

17 Therefore, if any man *be* in Christ he is a new creature;

[c] *Bears us away.*] This is the beautiful import of συνέχει, which suggests a noble simile, which few translations preserve. See the note on Phil. i. 23.

old things are past away; behold all things are become new.

of that man; so entirely are his principles, apprehensions, and pursuits changed; *old things are passed away*, and with respect to him, *behold, all things are become new*; he is brought as it were into another world, and is himself quite a different creature from what he before was.

SECT. IX.

2 Cor. V. 17.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

18 *And* as it is the work of God to create, so here it may properly be said, that *all things* [*are*] *of God, who hath* in his infinite condescension conquered our prejudices, and *reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ;* having by his grace in him, laid a proper and honourable foundation for the exercise of his mercy towards us, and for the subduing of our hearts to love and obedience. *And* in pursuance of this great and condescending design, he *hath committed to us* his ministers, and especially to his apostles, *the ministry of reconciliation;* entrusting us with this important message, to proclaim it to the world, and so far as in us lies, to transmit it to the remotest ages.

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

19 And this is an abstract and epitome of it all; *namely, that God was in Christ* united to him, and manifesting himself by him, thereby *reconciling the world* both of Jews and Gentiles *unto himself;* and in consequence of that, *not imputing to them*, and charging to their account, with righteous inexorable severity, *their* various and aggravated *offences:* but setting forth an act of grace, and unlimited pardon, to all those who should believe in him. This is that great Divine truth on which our salvation depends; *and* God *hath committed unto us*, as a trust of the highest importance, *the* gracious *word*, or message *of reconciliation.*

20 Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be

20 *Therefore we are* to be considered by you, as sustaining the office and dignity of *ambassadors for Christ*,[d] on his account, and in his stead; *so that God is*, as it were, *intreating* [*you*] *by us*, and *we beseech* [*you*] *in Christ's stead*,[e] with the greatest importunity and tenderness of address, *that*,

[d] *Ambassadors for Christ*.] The apostles were so in a peculiar sense; but if it be the will of Christ, that ministers in all ages should press men to accept the treaty of reconciliation established in him, then it is evident, they may be called *his ambassadors*, even though such a phrase had never been used in scripture.

[e] *In Christ's stead.*] So ὑπερ Χριϛȣ, plainly signifies here. When Christ was in the world, *he* pressed this treaty of reconciliation; and *we* rise up in his stead to urge it still farther.

SECT. IX.

2 Cor. V. 20.

when so much is done on God's part to make up the breach, which must otherwise have been fatal to his offending creatures, *ye* would not, by your own obstinacy, reject the benefit of all these condescending overtures; but would *be* cordially and truly *reconciled to God*, and thankfully accept of that friendship and protection which he vouchsafes to offer you. 21 And that your hearts may, if possible, be melted, we urge you by the most affecting of all arguments, even the blood and death of his incarnate Son: *for* we tell you, that *he*, that is, God, *hath made him who knew no sin*, but was perfectly innocent and perfectly holy, [*a*] *sin* [*offering*] *for us;* that by the sacrifice of himself, he might expiate the guilt of our transgressions, and *that* so *we might be made* accepted *in him*, and furnished with a plea, as prevalent for our justification and admission into the Divine favour, as if we had retained our innocence untainted, and in every respect conformed ourselves to *the righteousness* which the law *of God*[f] required and demanded.

> ye reconciled to God.
>
> 21 For he hath made him to *be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

2 Cor. VI. 1.

We then, [*as*] *the joint labourers* [*of God*] in this important work (compare 1 Cor. iii. 9. note [f],) *beseech* [*you*] with the most earnest importunity, *that you receive not the* surprising *grace of God in vain;* that you do not so slight this merciful proclamation of pardon, righteousness, and life, through the blood of his son, as to lose the benefit of it. 2 Again, let me urge immediate compliance with it on all who have not as yet secured its invaluable blessings; *for he says*, when represented as addressing himself to the Messiah,[g] in one of Isaiah's prophecies, (Isa. xlix. 8.) *I have heard thee in an acceptable time, and in a day of salvation have I helped* and sustained *thee.* God there,

> 2 Cor. VI. 1. We then *as* workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.
>
> 2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured

[f] *Made the righteousness of God.*] That is, *divinely righteous.* It is a very strong phrase to signify our being accepted of God, as perfectly righteous, when considered as by faith united to him who was perfectly so. There is an evident and beautiful contrast, between *Christ being made sin*, and *our being made righteousness*, that is, treated as perfectly righteous.

[g] Addressing himself to the Messiah.] I think it evident, that as these words stand in Isaiah, they are a promise made to Christ; in which God engages to give him the Gentiles, as an accession to his church, and reward of his mediatorial undertaking. And in this connection, it is as if the apostle had said, "since "such a promise is made, see to it that "you seek it, and you will find it an ac-"ceptable time." You will come as it were, in a good hour, as Christ is represented to have done.

thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.

as you see, speaks of a limited time, in which the Messiah's petition in favour of his people was welcome to him, and in which he was ready to grant salvation; and *behold, now* [*is*] *the accepted time; behold, now* [*is*] *the day of salvation:* this is the precious season, when, by the wonderful favour and goodness of God, complete forgiveness, and eternal felicity, is freely offered. O, that you may all be so wise as to accept it!

SECT. IX.

2 Cor. VI. 2.

IMPROVEMENT.

How adorable is the Divine condescension, that such an embassy of peace should ever be sent to any of the children of fallen Adam! How wonderful the Divine patience, that the *accepted time* and *the day of salvation*, should, after so many slights, be so long protracted! O, let us not *receive such grace in vain*, lest affronted mercy should forsake its seat, and give way to inexorable justice.

Chap. vi. 2.

Surely if there be a sentiment, that may justly excite the heart to the greatest fervour of affection, and that will vindicate the most ardent transports of zeal to spread it in the world, it must be that of the love of Christ; which may well bear us away, while we seriously consider, in how miserable a state he found us, dead in sin, and under a sentence of death by the Divine law; especially, when we farther reflect, at how expensive a rate he redeemed us, even with the price of his own life. Who then, that has any remains of judgment at all, must not judge and determine in his own mind, that it is most fit, that our ransomed lives should be sacred to him that redeemed them; that our breast should be on fire, with the most earnest desires to promote his cause and kingdom; that *henceforth*, from the time we come to the knowledge of this important truth, we should not *live to ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again*, resuming, with his renewed life, the same tender concern for our happiness, which engaged him continually to exert it in the most generous efforts for our recovery and salvation.

Chap. v. 14.

14, 15

Let all secular views, therefore, be given up; and let us labour to improve in that renovation of soul which is the essential character of the true Christian; and as ever we desire to have any satisfactory evidence, that we are in Christ, let us see to it that we are new creatures; and if we are indeed so, let us daily acknowledge our obligations to his transforming grace. From him are the first proposals of peace and reconciliation to offending creatures; from him, the disposition of soul, humbly to submit ourselves to the terms so kindly proposed, and to sue out

17

18

SECT. IX. Verse 19, 20

our own pardon agreeably to the purposes of this grand act of indemnity. How amazing the condescension that grants it; and appoints ambassadors to urge us, to have compassion on our own souls, and not reject this counsel of God against ourselves! May the ministers of the gospel often consider themselves in this view, as ambassadors and agents for Christ, by whom *God beseecheth sinners to be reconciled;* and let them prosecute this embassy, with all holy importunity and earnest address. O, that the success of it may be more apparent; that so that friendship might be established between earth and heaven, which may bring down daily anticipations of heaven to earth! Amen.

SECT. X.

The Apostle enlarges, with great freedom, on the temper, with which, in the midst of all their afflictions and persecutions, he and his brethren prosecuted that important embassy of which he had been speaking in the former section. 2 Cor. VI. 3—10.

2 CORINTHIANS VI. 3.

SECT. X. 2 Cor. VI. 3

THIS is the affair we negociate, this is the message we deliver; and while we are thus employed, it is our constant care, that *we* may behave in such a manner as may add the greatest efficacy to our address, and *give no offence*[a] to any, *by any* part of our [*conduct;*] *that the ministry* of reconciliation *be not blamed*, and the success of the gospel thereby obstructed.

4 *But* on the contrary we would be, and I hope we are, *in every respect, approving ourselves* to all that see and know us, such *as* they ought to be who have the honour of being *the ministers* and ambassadors *of God;* in this view we govern the inmost emotions of our souls, endeavouring to possess them *in much patience, in* the midst of all the *afflictions* which his providence calls us to bear, *in* all the *necessities* we are compelled to

2 COR. VI. 3. GIVING no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

[a] *Give no offence,* &c.] This clause is so connected with the foregoing that it would have been highly expedient to have continued the preceding section, at least to the end of this; but the length would be inconvenient. And there are some other instances, in which we have been forced to yield to necessity on such occasions; but the common division which separates the last verse of the 5th chapter from the first of the 6th seems yet more improper. To render the beginning of the section less apparently abrupt, I render that *we give no offence*, which had more literally been translated by the participle *giving*, &c. as in the following clauses; but such little variations as they affect not the sense, will I hope be excused, as what on my plan I knew not how to avoid.

5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings,

6 By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy

endure, *in* all the *straits* to which we are at any time reduced, and all the anguish of heart we may unavoidably feel in them[b]: This steady patience we endeavour to maintain, *in stripes*, when we are scourged in synagogues and cities, as if we were the most notorious offenders against God and men, and the vilest pests of society: *in imprisonments*, though we not only endure so many hardships in our confinement, but are cut off by it from these public labours for the glory of God and the edification of the church, which are dearer to us than our lives: *in tumults*[c], which are raised against us by Jews and Gentiles, and by which our enemies are often endeavouring to tear us in pieces: *in labours*, which we incessantly pursue, either in our ministerial work, or in those secular callings by which we are often obliged to earn our daily bread: *in watchings*, when in prosecution of these various employments, the hours of the night are added to those of the day, and we have hardly time for our necessary repose; *in fastings*, to which, besides those which devotion chooses, we are often obliged to submit, for want of proper supplies of food: Yet still, 6 in the midst of all these difficulties, conducting ourselves, *in* unspotted *purity*, labouring to improve daily *in* the *knowledge*[d] of those Divine truths which it is our great business to teach others, and by the exercise of a constant command over our passions, to grow *in long-suffering* and *in gentleness*, and every other amiable disposition which we cultivate *in* humble de-

[b] *Afflictions—necessities—straits.*] Dr. Whitby thinks, the first word, θλιψις, signifies *affliction* in general—the second, αναγκη, more *grievous* and unavoidable troubles—and the third στενοχωρια, such *pressures* as reduce us to the greatest straits: the compound sense therefore on the whole is, we are, as it were, hemmed in with *inevitable*, and humanly speaking, *inextricable calamities*, on every side. Compare sect. vii. note [c].

[c] *In tumults* ακαταστασιαις.] Beza interprets this, (and I think no man seems better to have understood the peculiar propriety of Greek words,) of such *attacks* as a man cannot stand against, but which bear him hither and thither by violence: he would render it in Latin, *exagitationibus*.

[d] *By knowledge.*] Interpreters give many different senses of this word. Dr. Scott says it signifies *prudence*, which is a Christian virtue, whereas the mere understanding of Divine things was a *gift*. Mr. Pyle thinks it signifies their *improving* the knowledge of Divine mysteries. Mr. Cradock refers it to an acquaintance with the true sense of scripture; which brings it to much the same with what has been called *the word of knowledge*. I conclude it implies not only a solicitude to grow in the knowledge of the gospel, but to improve that knowledge to the edification of others; which accordingly is expressed in the paraphrase.

SECT. X.

2. Cor. VI. 6.

pendence on the sanctifying influences of *the holy Spirit;* who dwells *in* our hearts, as a continued principle of that *undissembled love* which we exercise without limitation, not only to friends and benefactors, but enemies and persecutors. 7 Still we are faithful in asserting, and zealous *in* propagating, *the* sacred gospel, that *word of* uncorrupted and infallible *truth;* and we persist *in* it, supported by *the* almighty *power of* that *God* by whom it is revealed, and by whom we know it shall be rendered finally victorious; and in the mean time, while our enemies assault us on every side, it is our care still to be clothed and girded about *with the armour of righteousness,* both *on the right-hand and the left* [e]; well knowing that armour to be impenetrable. 8 And in this consciousness we pass unhurt, and in a great measure unmoved, *through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report,* neither elated with the one, nor depressed and dejected with the other. We are treated by many, *as* if we were a set of artful *deceivers,* that scruple no fraud and falsehood, by which we might carry our cause; and *yet* we know in our own conscience, and God can witness for us, that we are *true* and faithful, and would not deviate from the strictest rules of integrity, to carry any point, how important soever it might seem to ourselves, or the religion we propagate. 9 We are treated by men, *as* inconsiderable creatures, in the lowest rank of life, obscure and *unknown,* as undeserving any public notice and regard; and [*yet*] we are really *well known* to multitudes, by the happiest tokens, as the men by whom they have not only received that bodily healing, which they could never have expected from natural means, but by the yet more valuable memorials of having enlightened their eyes with Divine knowledge, and brought back their wandering souls to God. We are regarded by

Ghost, by love unfeigned,

7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right-hand and on the left,

8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and *yet* true;

9 As unknown, and *yet* well known; as dying, and behold

[e] *Armour of righteousness, on the right-hand, and on the left.*] Some unnaturally think this alludes to the *soldiers* who were taught to wield their swords with the *left-hand,* as well as the *right;* and others, that it refers to the Christians being armed against the temptations of prosperity and adversity. That may well be included; but the armour spoken of, seems of the *defensive* kind, on the arms, or breast, or both.

we live; as chastened, and not killed;

others, *as dying* men, and we seem ourselves to be in daily danger of being sacrificed to the rage of our enemies; and *yet behold* hitherto, through the guardian and astonishing care of that Redeemer whom we preach, *we* continue in life, and *live* to the most important purposes. Our afflictions are many, and we consider ourselves under them *as chastened* by our heavenly father; *yet*, blessed be his name, we are *not killed;* and far from intending our destruction, we know that he will over-rule these chastisements to the advancement of our salvation.

10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich: as having nothing, and *yet* possessing all things.

10 If our external circumstances alone be regarded, we must indeed appear *as sorrowful*, and the world will naturally conclude, that we have cause for continual lamentation; and *yet* when the inward dispositions of our minds are known, and the views with which we are secretly supported, it will be found, that we are *always rejoicing*, in the present assurances of the Divine favour, and the certain expectation of complete felicity and eternal glory. We appear *as poor* in this world, and indeed we are so; having neither silver nor gold, nor estate; and *yet* we are continually *enriching many*, with treasures, which they would not part with for all the revenues of princes and kings; *as having nothing* that we can call our own; and *yet* indeed, *possessing all things;* which we know to be ours, so far as our heavenly Father shall see fit; and therefore are as easy and happy as if we were actually the proprietors of the whole world.[f]

IMPROVEMENT.

WHOSE soul can remain untouched, while he reads this eloquent period in which the apostle's mouth is (as he afterwards expresses it) thus opened, in consequence of his heart's being enlarged! In how lively, yet unaffected a manner, does this sacred writer paint his own character and circumstances: and how much profound and important sense is there in those paradoxes which he so naturally introduces on this occasion! Let the ministers of the gospel herein behold, at once, their model

[f] *Possessing all things.*] This is certainly one of the sublimest passages that was ever writ. Compare Phil. iv. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Eph. i. 3. Rev. xxi. 7. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23.

SECT. X. and their support. Let them cultivate this inoffensive behaviour, not only out of regard to themselves, but that their office may not be censured; and still approve themselves the servants of God, by patience amidst all their tribulations, their necessities, and their pressures; and, so far as their circumstances require it, *by labours, by watchings, and fastings;* especially when by an indulgent Providence they are not called to do it *in stripes, in imprisonments,* and *in tumults.* Still let them cultivate *purity and knowledge, long-sufferings and gentleness, with unfeigned love in the Holy Ghost.* Aided by him, let them arm themselves with the word of truth, and in the strength of God, gird on the *armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.* Thus fortified they may boldly break their way through honour and infamy, through praise and reproach; as we plainly see that infamy and reproach may be the portion of the best of men, and the most useful members of society. Who are we, that we should refuse a cup, of which the apostles and our Lord drank so deep? But let us be superior to human censures. If any call us deceivers, let us shew that we are invariably true to the interests of God and of goodness. If they affect to overlook us, as unknown, and beneath their notice, let us endeavour to render ourselves well known, by the benefits which, by Divine grace, we are the instruments of conferring on men's souls. So shall we be always rejoicing in the midst of those sorrows of which nature cannot be entirely insensible; whilst amidst our poverty we are enriching many, yea then, though we have nothing that we can call our own, we shall possess all things; shall appear in the eyes of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, the richest and the happiest of mankind, even though we were in other respects, of all men the most miserable.

Verse 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

While we consider this as the character of the first preachers of Christianity, which, with so noble a plainness and simplicity they profess, let us adore the Divine grace by which such a spirit was raised in the world, and by which it hath in some measure been maintained, even to this day. And let it encourage our most earnest and affectionate prayers, that God would raise up in every age (and especially in our own, in which they seem so ready to fail) a generation of evangelical ministers: who, fired with such generous principles of action, and emulating so noble a character, may *commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God,* and roll away that reproach which unworthy men have brought on the most excellent of all offices. Thus armed, may they extend their happy conquests; thus animated, may they *see of the travail of their soul,* to their abundant, their everlasting satisfaction and delight.

SECT. XI.

The Apostle urges the Corinthians to avoid those alliances with idolaters, which might tend to ensnare them; and pleads the gracious promises God had made to his people, as an engagement to them to be upon their guard in this respect; and, in general, to aim at the sublimest attainments in religion. 2 Cor. VI. 11, *to the end.* Chap. VII. 1.

2 COR. VI. 11.

O YE Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

12 Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels.

13 Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto *my* children,) be ye enlarged.

14 Be ye not une-

2 CORINTHIANS VI. 11.

SECT. XI.

2 Cor. VI. 11.

YOU see, *O ye Corinthians,* my dear brethren, my beloved children, with how much freedom of address *our mouth is opened to you;* but words flow freely on an occasion, on which *our heart is* so much *enlarged,* in a tenderness, which neither words nor tears can sufficiently express. 12 Sure I am, that *ye are not straitened in us;* all that we can do for your comfort and happiness, you may securely promise yourselves: *but* I fear, *ye are straitened in your own bowels,* and have not all of you, that affection for us, nor readiness to receive our communications, which the relation between us might challenge, and my tenderness for you ought to excite. 13 And *therefore, for that very recompense,* which we most of all desire, which is so just and reasonable, and which indeed, in its consequences, would be yet more beneficial to you, than delightful to us, *I speak* to you *as to [my] own children,* with all the genuine overflowings of paternal love: *be ye also* thus *enlarged*[a] towards me, and let this confidence with which I am pouring forth, as it were, all my heart into your bosom, strike strongly on your minds, to raise some correspondent emotion.

14 And how shall that love be expressed? Truly by no method can it more effectually be manifested, than by taking all the care you possibly can, for your own security and happiness. In

[a] *Be ye also enlarged.*] Perhaps the apostle's meaning may be this. "Give "me that pleasure which my paternal "tenderness towards you will find, in "having it in my power to do abundance of good, through your readiness "to perceive what we are so ready to "impart, and to fall in with my attempts "of usefulness among you."

SECT. XI.

2 Cor. VI. 14.

which view, I must particularly urge it, that ye *be not unequally yoked* either in marriage, or any other intimate friendship, *with unbelievers; for what participation hath* that strict *righteousness*, to the practice of which the gospel calls you, its sincere votaries, *with* that *unrighteousness*, in which they are so generally plunged? *Or what communion hath* the *light*, into which you by the Divine mercy are brought, *with* that deplorable *darkness* of ignorance and vice in which they
15 continue to be lost? *Or what concord* [*is there*,] or can there be, *between Christ*, to whom ye are united, *and Belial*, who reigneth in the children of disobedience? *Or what part hath a believer with an infidel*; or an infidel with a believer? The union is surely, at the first view of it, too unnatural to be either easy, safe, or
16 lasting. *And* indeed I may say, *what consistence has the temple of God*[b] *with* those detestable *idols*, which would by this means be, as it were, erected in it: or at least placed so near, that it must be polluted by them? It is a proper question, and a just view in which to state the point; *for ye are the temple of the living God, as God* himself *hath said, I will*, in the most intimate manner, *dwell in them*,[c] *and walk among* [*them*,] *and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* (Lev. xxvi. 12.) Now though this immediately refers to God's extraordinary presence among the Jews, yet, when we consider the constitution of the Christian church, we cannot possibly imagine, that God is less favourably present with it, than he was with the Jewish.
17 We may *therefore* consider the exhortation so naturally grounded on such a promise, and may, as it were, hear God calling to us, and saying, as to Israel, with respect to idolaters of old, (Isa. lii. 11.) *Come out from among them, and be*

unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore, come out from among them, and be

[b] *Temple of God.*] There seems a peculiar *strength* in this *interrogation*. If God would not endure *idols* in any part of the land in which he dwelt, how much less would he endure them under his own roof?

[c] In the most intimate manner *dwell in them.*] No words I know in our language, can equal the force of the original, ενοικησω εν αυτοις, *I will take up my indwelling in them.* This was a promise made to the Jews on their being converted, and consequently refers to their privileges as members of the Christian church; which shews the propriety of the application, Jer. xxxi. 33, chap. xxxi. 37, 38.

SECT. XI.

2 Cor. VI. 17.

ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

ye separate[d], *saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and* if ye behave in a manner thus worthy your professed relation to me, *I will* then *receive you*, which, till then, I cannot do;

18 *And will be a father unto you*[e], *and ye shall be to me for sons and for daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* Now surely if the Almighty God will say thus unto us, we ought to be much affected with it, and neglect nothing that is necessary to insure so great and invaluable a privilege.

2 Cor. VII. 1.

2 Cor. VII. 1. Having, therefore, these promises (dearly beloved,) let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Having therefore, my *beloved* brethren, *such* gracious *promises* of God's abode among us, his dwelling in us, and his adopting us into the number of his children, let us act worthy so high a relation, and as God is perfectly holy, *let us* labour to the utmost to *purify ourselves from all pollution*, both *of the flesh and of the spirit*, from every impurity of life, and from every sensual affection, which might defile our hearts, and render them displeasing to him. Nor let us rest merely in this negative view of religion; but let us endeavour to be *perfecting holiness*, and lay the foundation of it *in the fear of God*, in whose presence we always are, and by whom all our actions are examined, and to whom our hearts are open; well knowing, that we cannot secure to ourselves these blessings, without such a care; and that it is what gratitude most powerfully dictates, where we have the highest hopes that we are interested in them.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 11.

THUS may cordial love open the mouth of Christian ministers, when addressing their people; and thus may the love of Christians to each other in every station of life express itself, and produce for a recompense a mutual enlargement. This is one of the sweetest pleasures, and richest blessings of friendship when

12

[d] *Be ye separate.*] As God's promise of dwelling in a peculiar manner among the Jews, obliged them to separate themselves from the converse of their heathen neighbours, that they might not be ensnared with their superstitions; much more are Christians obliged by that peculiar gracious presence of God which they enjoy, to separate themselves from all impure and idolatrous worship. Exod. xxix. 45, 46. Lev. xxvi. 11, 12.

[e] *I will be a father, &c.*] It is queried where God says this? Some answer Jer. xxxi. 1. But that does not sufficiently express the paternal relation. Others refer to 2 Sam. vii. 8, 14, which may be applied to Christ, and, in him, to believers. Compare Heb. i. 4, 6. Some think, it is not expressly to be found any where, and that it refers to all the scriptures where God calls his people by the title of children.

SECT. XI.

wisely and happily contracted. Let us therefore cultivate such friendships; and be very careful, that we do not form others, which may properly be called, being unequally yoked. We profess to be pursuing righteousness, to be light in the Lord, to be united to Christ, to be consecrated to God: let us not then have an intimate converse with the slaves of unrighteousness, the children of darkness, the sons of Belial, the votaries of idols. Far from subjecting ourselves to such dangerous snares, let us rather be earnestly seeking every advantage for making the noblest improvements in religion. Let us examine our lives and our hearts, that we may be *cleansed from all pollutions of the spirit, as well as of the flesh*. Let us labour after sublime ideas of the perfection of holiness, and after a temper of mind correspondent to those ideas. In order to attain which, let us often be surveying our high and glorious privileges, and those exceeding rich and precious promises, which God by his gospel is making to us; separating ourselves from all evil, that he may receive us, that he may dwell with us, and walk among us, that he may consecrate us a holy temple to himself; yea, that the Lord Almighty may become a Father to us, and own us for his sons and his daughters. To us is the word of this promise sent, this is the hope of our calling: let us make it sure, let us daily survey it, that it may produce and cherish a correspondent sanctity and zeal. Amen.

Verse 14, 16

Chap. vii. 1.

Chap. vi. 17-18

SECT. XII.

The Apostle farther expresses his affection to the Corinthians, as illustrated by the pleasure with which he received good tidings from them by Titus, and by the part he took in the sorrows which his necessary reproofs had occasioned, and his present joy in that these sorrows had issued in their reformation. 2 Cor. VII. 2, *to the end.*

2 CORINTHIANS VII. 2.

SECT. XII.

2 Cor. VII. 2.

BUT to return from this digression, to the attempt I was making to remove some prejudices, which, much to your own detriment, I know that some of you have imbibed against my person and ministry. Give me leave, my brethren, to intreat you, that ye *receive us* with that affection which is due to the faithful servants of Christ, and to those who have been instruments in your conversion and edification: for whatever may have been insinuated by ill-designing persons to the contrary, *we have injured no man* in his person, *we have corrupted no*

2 COR. VII. 2. RECEIVE us: we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we

have defrauded no man.

no man in his morals, *we have defrauded no man*[a] in his property, by any of those artifices which covetousness sometimes practises under very solemn forms. *I speak not [this] to condemn [you]* of ingratitude, or infidelity, though I have been obliged to find some fault with you; *for I have told you before, that ye are in our hearts* with such tenderness, that if it were the will of God, we could be glad both *to live and to die with [you;]* to spend the remainder of our lives at Corinth, or to end them there, did not the purposes of our Master's glory call to other, and many of them less grateful and agreeable scenes.

SECT. XII.

2 Cor. VII. 3.

3 I speak not this to condemn *you*: for I have said before, that you are in our hearts to die and live with *you*.

4 Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, great *is* my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

4 *Great*, as you see, [*is*] *my freedom of speech to you*, upon this subject; *and great* is also *my boasting concerning you*, as to the assurance which I have of your regards for me; and, on this account, *I am filled with consolation* in the remembrance of you; *I* do *exceedingly abound*[b] *in joy, in* the midst of *all our affliction*, when I think how well you behave, and how happy an alteration is prevailing among you.

5 For when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears.

5 An instance of this affectionate regard I have lately had an opportunity deeply to feel, and very naturally to manifest: *for when we came into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted in every [place]* and circumstance, through the rage and malice of our enemies; yet these alarms could not cause us to forget you; but while *without* there [*were*] continual *fightings*, with the most furious and cruel opposition, *within* there [were] *fears* and anxieties on your account.

6 Nevertheless, God that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus:

6 *But* the blessed *God, who* is pleased to wear it among his other titles, that he *is the Comforter of those who are brought low* by affliction and distress, and owns it as his prerogative, to bear up the human heart, *comforted us by the coming of Titus;* who arrived so seasonably at Macedonia, at a time when both our circumstances and frame of spirit needed all the assistance that so pious and delightful a friend could give.

7 And not by his

7 *And* indeed it was *not*

[a] *Defrauded no man.*] The word ἐπλεονεκτήσαμεν, signifies to indulge a covetous temper, and make a *prey* of others by it; and perhaps intimates, that the false teachers, of whom he had so much reason to complain, had done it.

[b] *Exceedingly abound.*] The word ὑπερπερισσεύομαι, has an inexpressible energy; and is, if I mistake not, a word of the apostle's own making.

SECT. XII.

2 Cor. VII. 7.

merely by his coming, that I was thus comforted; *but with the consolation with which he was comforted by you, when he told us* particularly *of your earnest desire* to rectify whatever was amiss, and of *your grief* for what had been matter of offence to God, and sorrow to me, and of *your* affectionate *zeal for me, so that I rejoiced much more* than in other circumstances I could
8 have done. *Because* now I can take the liberty to say, that *if I grieved you in the epistle* which I formerly wrote, in which indeed I was obliged to treat some subjects with greater severity than I could have wished, *I do not repent* of it, *however anxious I might before have been*; [c] for the regret I at first felt on that account, is now swallowed up in that superior pleasure with which I see the happy effects of it; *for I* now have the satisfaction to *find, that this epistle, however for a little while* it might have *grieved you*, hath by the blessing of God, been produc-
9 tive of great good. And *now I rejoice, not that ye were grieved*, for that will always give me concern when I reflect upon it; *but that ye grieved* to such happy purpose, and were by that means brought *to* true *repentance*, to a change of mind; *for* this was indeed the case, as *ye were grieved with a* penitential and humble *regard to* the honour of the blessed *God*; who is so immediately and peculiarly affected by the irregularities of those that profess themselves his people *So that* on the whole, *ye were not in any degree endamaged by us*; but on the contrary received, as we intended, great benefit by the severity
10 we were compelled to use. *For* this is indeed the natural effect of a sorrow like yours; that *grief, which regards* the honour of *God*, and takes its rise from such tender and grateful views of him, as we before hinted, *worketh* a *repentance*, which leads *to salvation*, and issues in it; and

coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.

10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not

[c] *However anxious I might before have been*: ει και μετεμελομην.] So I chose to render the word, as μεταμελεια strictly expresses an *after-care* and anxiety for any thing that has been done; whereas the word *repent* always signifies a wish it had not been done. Now as what St. Paul did, in writing the former epistle, was *proper*, and done under the direction of the Divine Spirit, it does not seem reasonable to suppose that he *really repented* of it. It may also signify a kind of *misgiving* of heart, natural, when the reproof, however necessary, is given to a person one tenderly loves, where the event is dubious, as in this instance it might be.

to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

therefore is *never* afterwards *to be repented of;* *whereas the sorrow* that arises merely from a regard to the things *of the world,* is often a foolish excess, productive of fatal consequences, and sometimes *worketh death;* either breaking the heart, arming men against their own lives, or otherwise producing that rebellion against God, by which the soul is finally destroyed.

11 For behold, this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, *what* clearing of yourselves; yea, *what* indignation; yea, *what* fear; yea, *what* vehement desire: yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge[d] in all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

11 But it is pleasant to trace the happy effects of that better principle which hath influenced you; *for behold, this same thing,* that is, *your being grieved* for your sins *out of* a pious *respect to God,* and the dishonour it brought upon him, *what diligence it wrought in you* to reform what had been amiss; *yea* [*what*] a solicitous care, to make the best *apology* you could for what you had done; and of the sounder part, to make their innocence appear; *yea,* [*what*] *indignation* did it produce against those who had given the offence; *yea,* [*what*] *fear,* lest any thing of that sort should be encouraged and repeated; *yea,* [*what*] *earnest desire* of seeing me again, and confirming our friendship in surer bonds; *yea,* [*what*] *zeal* in every method that could be subservient to these views; *yea,* indeed, if I may so express myself, [*what*] *revenge,*[d] against yourselves for those things, which, all circumstances considered, you could not but condemn; against sin, as your great enemy; so that *upon the whole,* considering you as a society, *you have approved yourselves to be pure in this matter,* and there is no farther stain remaining on the church, where I was so much afraid of lasting infamy and reproach.

12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but

12 Let it not *therefore* be the cause of any farther distress; but assure yourselves, that *if I have written* [*any thing*] *to you,* different from what I could wish to write, and you to receive, [*it was*] *not* so much with any personal views, *on his account, who had done, or his who had received the injury,*[e] *but for the*

[d] *Yea,* [*what*] *revenge.*] Mr. Gataker has very well observed here, that Calvin and Reynolds, and some other divines of note, have been misled, by taking it for granted, that these verses contain seven distinct marks of true repentance, to be found in every sincere penitent; whereas indeed these are not characters of the temper of each, but of different persons in different circumstances, according to the part they respectively acted in the affair in question.

[e] *Received the injury.*] Hence some infer, and it seems reasonable, that the fa-

SECT. XII.

2 Cor. VII. 12.

sake of manifesting our diligence and care *for you*, which through the Divine goodness hath now been made apparent, though by so severe and painful a trial, *before God,* [*and*] *unto you.*

13 *Therefore we were* greatly *comforted in your consolation, and we rejoiced more exceedingly in the joy of* good *Titus*, which gave me a pleasure yet greater than he himself could derive from it; *because* we find your temper and state so good, 14 that *his spirit was refreshed by you all. So that* on the whole, *if I had boasted any thing of you to him*, that I was confident my Corinthian friends would approve themselves worthy of the figure they had formerly made in religion, *I was not ashamed* of that boasting; *but as we have always spoken in the* exactest regard to *truth*, when addressing ourselves *to you, so also our boasting* [*concerning you*] *to Titus*, that all would be well again at Corinth, *has been verified*, 15 greatly to our satisfaction: *So that his tenderest affections are* now *engaged towards you exceedingly*; which he expresses in the most genuine manner, *whenever he* mentions, or *recollects, the obedience of you all* in general to those apostolical injunctions which I sent you by him: [*and*] *how you received him* as my messenger, and the minister of Christ, *with fear and trembling*, expressing always the most solicitous concern, that he might see nothing which it might grieve him to observe, or me to hear reported 16 by him. *I rejoice therefore, that in every respect I have confidence in you,*[f] and am encouraged to renew that honourable testimony which it has always been my pleasure to bear to your character, and which, I assure myself, you will continue more and more to deserve.

that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.

13 Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.

14 For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which *I made* before Titus, is found a truth.

15 And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him.

16 I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 3

How great is the boldness of a good conscience! and how much does it promote that freedom, that authority, with which the ministers of Christ address themselves to their hearers,

ther of the incestuous person was still living; which must be a great aggravation of his crime.

f *Confidence in you.*] The address of all this part of the epistle is wonderful. This in particular, finely introduces what he had to say in the following chapter, and is strongly illustrated by chap. ix. 2-4.

when they can thus appeal to them as to the uprightness, integrity, and disinterestedness of their conduct! Frequently do we, in some degree, share the trials of the apostle; and while we may be surrounded with fightings without, are exercised with fears within; but we have a God, who assumeth it to himself as one of his titles, that *he comforteth those that are cast down*, and brought low. May every sincere lover of Christ, and of souls, be filled with consolation from him, and amidst all his tribulations, whatever they are, be made to rejoice exceedingly in the joy of his Christian friends and converts! May he trace in them the marks of that true repentance which is never to be repented of, and which is represented in such genuine language, as no heart could have dictated, but one that had felt what is here described. And since there is *not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not;* and consequently none who needed not repentance, may we all know by experience, that diligence, that indignation, that fear, that zeal, that desire, that revenge, which the apostle saw in his Corinthian brethren, and which he rejoiced so much to see! There is not a surer office of friendship, than to endeavour to promote this godly sorrow. And O, how blessed, how divine a principle is religion, whose most painful operation is productive of so much inward and substantial happiness! whereas the sorrow of this world, to which they who fondly love the world, and eagerly pursue it, are most exposed, is attended with such fatal consequences, as even to work death.

Verse 5, 6, 4, 10, 11, 9, 10

Let us observe with pleasure the address of St. Paul, to make the Corinthians what they ought to be, by representing to them that pleasing confidence he reposed in them, the manner in which he had even boasted of them, and the satisfaction he found in all their first tendencies towards a reformation of remaining defects. And let us earnestly pray for the Spirit of wisdom, that our hearts may be happily attempered to such due mixtures of faithful inspection, resolute sincerity, and endearing tenderness, with respect to all who are committed to our care, whether in offices of a public or private nature, as may most effectually promote their advancement in the Divine life, and our own abundant joy.

14, 16, 13

SECT. XIII.

The Apostle enters on the subject of the contribution he was setting forward for the relief of the poor Christians of Judea, recommends to the Corinthians the example of the Macedonians, reminds them of the great grace of our blessed Redeemer, and

gives some advice as to the manner of collecting and transmitting their bounty. 2 Cor. VIII. 1—15.

2 CORINTHIANS VIII. 1.

SECT. XIII.

2 Cor. VIII. 1.

NOW we think it proper, *brethren*, to *inform you* of the happy and honourable effects of that abundant communication *of the grace of God*,[a] which has been mercifully *bestowed upon the churches* planted here *in Macedonia*, at Philippi, Thessalonica, Beræa, and other places in this province: which has engaged them to exert themselves in a most liberal and generous contribution for the relief of the poor saints in 2 Judea. And here it would be a pleasure to me more particularly to tell you, *how in a great* and extraordinary *trial of affliction*, which they met with from their persecuting enemies, who were always so ready to harass and plunder them, (compare Acts xvi. chap. xvii.) *their overflowing joy* for receiving the Christian religion, *and* with it, if I may so speak, *the depth of their poverty* amidst these distresses of their own, *hath* so *abounded* and furnished such supplies, *to the riches of their liberality*, that indigent as they are, they have done wonders for the relief 3 of their yet poorer brethren. *So that I* can *testify* for them, and I do attest it with pleasure, *that to* the utmost extent of [*their*] *power; yea, and beyond* what could have been expected, or on the usual principles of computation, judged to have been in [*their*] *power*,[b] [*they have been*] *willing of themselves*, without my solicitation, to do the most generous things 4 for the public service; At the same time *intreating us with much importunity, that we would receive the gift* which their bounty had

2 COR. VIII. 1. MOREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:

2 How that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

3 For to *their* power (I bear record) yea, and beyond their power, *they were* willing of themselves:

4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the

[a] *Grace of God.*] As χαρις sometimes signifies a *gift*, and things excellent and extraordinary in their kind, are in Hebrew often said to be *things of God*, or *Divine*; as *trees of God*, are great and flourishing trees; *cities of God*, great cities, (compare Psalm lxxx. 10. Acts vii. 20.) some have explained χαριν τε Θεε, as if it signified the *great*, or *liberal gift*, which has been given in, or by the Macedonian churches; and Dr. Whitby very sufficiently proves, that χαρις sometimes is put for *gift*. But considering what is the general sense of the word in St. Paul's writings, and what his sentiments evidently are, as to the doctrine of Divine influences on the heart, I chose to follow the plainest and most obvious and common interpretation, which indeed I generally think the best, and take this verse to be in sense much equivalent to that pious acknowledgment of David, 1 Chron. xxix. 14. *who are we, that we should be able to offer so willingly*, &c.

[b] *To their power, yea, and beyond that.*] This is a noble hyperbole, like that of Demosthenes, "I have performed all, "even with an industry beyond my "power."

SECT. XIII.

gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

prepared, *and* [*take*] *a part of the ministration of the saints,* as one of their commissioners to convey it to Jerusalem. *And* [*this they did,*]

2 Cor. VIII. 5.

5 And *this they did,* not as we hoped, but first gave their own-selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God:

not merely *as we* expected and *hoped, but* even beyond all we could have imagined; for *they first gave themselves,* and all they had, entirely *to* the honour and service of *the Lord; and* having thus surrendered all they were, and all they possessed, to Christ and his cause, they in effect resigned themselves *to us by the will of God,* putting themselves in this respect under my direction, to do what I should in conscience think most adviseable in present circumstances.

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.

6 *Insomuch that,* unable to withstand their pressing solicitation, *we desired Titus, that as he had begun* to do in other places, *so he would also complete this* instance of *grace* and liberality *among you*[c], and finish what yet remains to be done, as to collecting the intended contribution.

7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us; see that ye abound in this grace also.

7 *Therefore,* my brethren, *as ye abound in every* other [*gift*] (1 Cor. i. 4,—7. chap. xii. 8—10,) and particularly *in faith,* which rises to the fullest persuasion of the truth of the gospel, and *in all utterance* and ability to instruct others, *and in* the clearest *knowledge* of Divine things, *and in all* active *diligence, and in your* affectionate *love to us;* so [*we exhort*] and intreat [*you,*] that ye would take this opportunity of shewing, *that ye abound also in this grace* of Christian liberality.

8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.

8 And here, you will observe, that *I speak not by* way of *command,* so as to take upon me to determine how much, or in what proportion ye shall give; *but that I may prove, by* what I have just been saying of *the diligence of others,* that is the Macedonians, *the* genuine *sincerity of your love* in its most substantial effects.

9 For ye know

9 And I may well expect, that you should exert yourselves on such an occasion, in consequence of your acquaintance with the great and most fundamental principles of the gospel, in which you have been so faithfully instructed. *For you*

[c] *Complete this grace among you.*] I doubt not, that χάριν here signifies *gift,* or present, or liberality; but I thought, that retaining the word *grace* here, might make the English reader more sensible of the ambiguity and emphasis of the word usually rendered *grace.*

SECT. XIII.

2 Cor. VIII. 9.

know in some measure, though it is impossible for you fully to know, and distinctly to conceive in its utmost extent, *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich* in the glories of the heavenly world, and in supreme dominion and authority, there, *yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through* this *his* voluntary *poverty, might* not only be discharged from that dreadful debt you had contracted to the Divine justice, by which you were become obnoxious to everlasting ruin and condemnation; but that you might also *become rich* in the favour of God, and in the graces of the Holy Spirit now, and at length for ever rich in the treasures and glories of the heavenly world:

the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

10 *And* as I cannot but desire, that the servants of so excellent a Master may *herein* imitate his example, and take the most effectual methods to advance his honour and interest in the world, *I give* [*my*] *advice* to you in general, to dispatch this affair vigorously; *for this is* evidently *expedient for you*, and consistent with what you have already in a manner bound yourselves to, *as you have begun, not only to do something, but* also *to exert yourselves*[d] resolutely and determinately,

10 And herein I give *my* advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago.

11 *a year ago.* I *now therefore* intreat you not to be offended, if I urge you to *complete your undertaking, that according to the readiness* which you expressed *to determine*, and resolve upon this good scheme, *there may also be the accomplishment*, of that determination, *in proportion to what you have.*

11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have.

12 The smallest contribution from such a principle will be pleasing to God, and most assuredly draw its reward after it; *for if there be first a readiness of mind, according to what a man hath,* [*he is*] *accepted* of God, [*and*] *not according to what he hath not*: a little in proportion to his abilities, is pleasing to God; yea, more pleasing, than it would be, if this proportion were less prudently observed.

12 For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not.

13 *I say* [*this*] *not* by any means, *that* [*there should be*] *a rest to others, and affliction to you,* that they should be eased, and you

13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened:

14 overburdened; *But that of an equality,*

14 But by an equa-

d *To exert yourselves.*] It is evident that, τὸ θέλειν, is an advance upon, ποιῆσαι. So that it must signify a *resolute* and *vigorous determination.* Compare 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

SECT. XIII.

2 Cor. VIII. 14

lity, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want, that there may be equality,

15 As it is written, He that *had gathered* much, had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little, had no lack.

on just and equitable principles, *your abundance* [*may be*] *at this time,* wisely and happily employed, as [*a supply*] *to their want: that* at some other time, if Providence give the occasion and opportunity, *their abundance also may be* [*a supply*] *to your want;*[e] *that there may be* such an *equality* [in the] distribution of the good things of this life, as our mutual relation to each other may require. For the bountiful providence (15) of God hath furnished them out in such an abundance, and given to some of you such a superfluity, that there is room for a liberal distribution, without injuringthe original possessor: and if such a distribution be made, we shall find that, *as it is written,* concerning the manna, (Exod. xvi. 18.) *He that* [*had*] *much did not abound,* when all came to be divided, *and he that* [*had*] *little did not lack;*[f] so he that has the greatest abundance of this world, may find necessitous objects enough, and he that is most destitute, will be competently supplied, if his richer brethren do their duty in this respect.

IMPROVEMENT.

How peculiarly amiable does the Christian liberality of these Macedonians appear, when considered as *abounding in a great trial of affliction, and in the depth of their poverty;* yet a poverty, mingled with an abundance of joy, on account of that rich and happy state into which the gospel had brought them, and the first fruits of that glorious inheritance to which they were entitled by the tenor of it. They were willing of themselves to contribute, even beyond their power, as persons of common generosity would have estimated it. Nor did they on their (Verse 1, 2) dying beds repent such a use of their property, or wish that it (3) had been spent in gratifying their appetites, or hoarded for those they were to leave behind them. Nor do they now regret these liberalities, or complain that their expected harvest is perished.

[e] *That their abundance,* &c.] It might seem obvious to object, that the Corinthians were rich and prosperous, the Jews poor and oppressed; so that there was no room to expect that this should happen. But it might be replied, "all "human affairs are uncertain; Corinth "itself, from great prosperity, had been "utterly undone in the Roman war by "Mummius some time before: or parti- "cular persons might be distressed, or "the whole body of Christians there re- "duced by persecutions, though their "city continued to flourish."

[f] *He that had much,* &c.] Perhaps nothing could more illustrate the powerful agency of the Divine Providence, in events which seem most contingent, than this, that though such different quantities of *manna* were gathered by different persons, yet on an average there should be an *omer* for each.

SECT. XIII. Let us remember their example for imitation; nor let any, who have a mite to spare, be wholly deficient, how low soever their circumstances may be; remembering that gracious complacency, with which, *where there is a willing mind*, the smallest tribute to the treasury of God, is accepted *according to what a* Verse 12 *man hath, and not according to what he hath not.* To animate us to the most generous efforts of overflowing benevolence, may 9 we ever bear in our mind that grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, of which we all know something, but which it is impossible we should ever fully know; because it passeth knowledge: that grace which engaged him, when rich, for our sakes to become poor, that we might be inriched by his poverty! What have we that deserves to be called a possession, which we do not hold by an act of Divine bounty and grace?

Let us consider ourselves as under indispensable engagements in consequence of it, to consecrate our all to him, conscious that our all is but a low return for the infinite obligations under which he has laid us. He hath contrived and determined, that the poor in some form or another we should have with us always, that we may do them good, as a token of our gratitude 15 to him. Let us faithfully aim to supply their need, and he who hath most, will have no superfluity to throw away upon the lusts or vanities of life; and he who hath least, will have no unsupplied lack: but the poor will rejoice in the relief of their necessities; and the rich, in the happiest and most delightful use of their abundance.

SECT. XIV.

The Apostle expresses his joy for the readiness of Titus to assist in finishing the collection; and speaks of the honourable character of other Christian brethren, whom he had joined with him in the same commission. 2 Cor. VIII. 16, *to the end.*

2 CORINTHIANS VIII. 16.

SECT. XIV. 2 Cor. VIII. 16 *BUT* while I speak of this collection, which I am desirous of promoting, [*I*] would [*return*] my humble *thanks to God who gave that* same *diligent care for you in the heart of Titus,* and formed him to these generous and Christian 17 sentiments. *For indeed he* not only cheerfully accepted, and *complied with the exhortation* I gave him; *but being more forward* than I thought to have found him, *he went to you* freely *of his own accord,* though he must see that some pressing and peculiar difficulties would attend the undertaking.

2 COR. VIII. 16. BUT thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you.

17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

18 And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise *is* in the gospel, throughout all the churches:

19 (And not *that* only, but was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration* of your ready mind:)

20 Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us;

21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of man.

And we have also *sent* together *with him, that* excellent Christian *brother* [a] and friend, Luke, *whose praise in the gospel,* [*is*] *in all the churches,* on account of the various and eminent services that he has done for the interests of Christianity, wherever his influence has extended, both by his writing and exhortations. *And not only* is 19 he *so* [b] much esteemed on these accounts, *but he was also ordained* and appointed *by* the stretching forth of the hand, in token of the common consent of *the churches,* whom we consulted on this occasion, particularly in Macedonia, *to be our fellow-traveller with this grace which is* now *administered* and undertaken *by us,* purely *for the glory of the same Lord, and* for [*the declaration of*] *your ready mind,* in which I was desirous to let you know how heartily I concur.

And we now send him to you, and I have de- 20 termined to join a man of his excellent character with me; carefully *avoiding this, that any one should blame,* or throw any reflection upon *us,* for the part we may take *in* the management of *this abundance* of your bounty, which is *administered by us;* lest any should be so unjust and cruel as to insinuate, that I have appropriated any part of it to my own use, or to any purpose whatsoever, different from that for which it was originally given: Therein *providing* 21 *things* decent, *honest* and honourable, *not only before the Lord,* to whom it is our first, and chief care to approve ourselves, *but also before men;* that we may guard as much as possible, against

[a] *That brother,* &c.] Some suppose this anonymous, though excellent person, to have been Mark or Silas, or Barnabas; but I rather, with most commentators, suppose it to have been Luke, who certainly attended St. Paul in his journey to Jerusalem. Some object, that the brother here spoken of, was sent by St. Paul to Corinth, in company with Titus; whereas Luke went with St. Paul to Troas, and from thence to Corinth, Acts xx. 4, 6. But Dr. Whitby replies, I think with some considerable weight, that it is possible St. Paul might go from Philippi to Corinth, and from thence to Troas, and so persons sent before to prepare his way might come and bring word to St. Paul, that the collection was ready, and go back with him to receive it. See Whitby on chap. ii. 12. Many ancient Christians thought that expression, *whose praise in the gospel is in all the churches,* refers to the universal applause with which St. Luke's gospel was every where received; and I have paraphrased it so as to include that, though I think the apostle's meaning more extensive. See Gurdon at Boyle's Lect. p. 482.

[b] *And not only so.*] This 19th verse is to be included in a parenthesis, and the continued sense of verses 18 and 20 will be, *we have sent that brother—to avoid blame,* &c.

SECT. XIV.

2 Cor. VIII. 22

any suspicion of our character, which might hinder our usefulness. *And we have sent with them*, that is, with Luke and Titus, *our* other friends, and well-beloved *brother*, Apollos, *whom we have often proved in many* other *affairs, to be* in a very extraordinary degree *diligent; but* who will *now*, I doubt not, approve himself *much more diligent*, and exert himself to the utmost in carrying on this collection, *on account of the great confidence [I have] in you*, as to your goodness and liberality: on which consideration he has changed his resolution against making you a visit; which, while he had any apprehension you might make him an occasion of quarrelling and contending he would by no means be persuaded to do.

22 And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I *have* in you.

23 *And if [there be any question] concerning Titus, [he is] my partner, and* my *fellow-labourer with respect to you*; one, who sincerely shares my care for you, and is always ready to act in concert with me, in any attempt to correct what is amiss among you, and to promote your improvement in real Christianity. *Or* if the question be *[concerning]* any other of *our brethren*, whom I have mentioned above, *[they are] the messengers of the churches*,[c] whom several Christian societies have chosen to send about this business; and they are persons of so valuable a character, *[and]* do so great a credit to their profession, that I may not improperly call them *the glory of Christ* in

23 Whether *any do inquire* of Titus, *he is* my partner, and fellow-helper concerning you: or our brethren *be inquired of*, *they are* the messengers of the churches, *and* the glory of Christ.

24 the world. *Shew therefore to them*, I intreat you, *even in the sight of* all *the churches*, to which they are related, and to whom they will undoubtedly make their report concerning you, *the demonstration of your love, and* the reasonableness of *our boasting over you*; that it may ap-

24 Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

[c] *The messengers of the churches.*] I can think of nothing more unreasonable, than to translate this word, *apostles*; as the English word *apostles* is now by long use appropriated to what is only a signification of the original. As an *apostle of Jesus Christ* is one *sent forth by him*, so an *apostle of any church*, must surely signify, one *sent forth by that society*. And if I believed that there was so early, as at this time, a minister in every church, superior to a common pastor, which the most able advocates for Diocesan episcopacy seem not generally to think, I could not imagine it consistent with the dignity and importance of their office, that they should be parted with on such an errand, which any common deacon might with sufficient propriety have performed. It is indeed true, that St. Paul was charged with this trust; but then it seems to have been after he had determined on this journey to Jerusalem, and not to have been the occasion of that journey.

pear to be as well founded as I assuredly believe that it is. SECT. XIV.

IMPROVEMENT.

THE tenderness of ministers, in all points, where the comfort and edification of the church is concerned, is indeed matter of the highest moment; and where it is remarkable in its degree, it affords just cause of thanksgivings to God: for it is he who *puts into their hearts that earnest care*, who excites and maintains every sentiment of benevolence, when they offer themselves willingly to any generous and charitable service. It is grace that has communicated whatever good is done; and it ought to be ascribed to the glory of the same Lord from whom it comes; and it loses much of its value, if it be not directed to this ultimate, this supreme end. Ver. 16. 17

When the Corinthians desired to deposit their alms in the hands of St. Paul, they certainly acted a very wise part; as no man living could have rendered them more secure, as to the fidelity or the discretion of the distribution. Yet we see, that high as the Apostle's character stood, and though he had so often given, and was daily renewing such striking demonstrations both of his wisdom and integrity; yet he would not undertake the trust alone, but used all proper methods to approve his exactness in the management thereof, even to strangers, *providing things honest* and laudable, *not only in the sight of God, but of all men.* 20 21

May ministers be often thus employed, as the almoners of persons richer than themselves, (as their readiness to help the poor in their temporal affairs, may greatly promote their usefulness in spirituals;) and may they be found to manage their trust with the like conscious and delicate honour. May they shew a disposition, like that of St. Paul, to assist in establishing and advancing the characters of their younger brethren, and introducing them into esteem and confidence. Thus will they indeed most effectually strengthen their own hands, and edify and comfort the churches; will prove the glory of Christ themselves in the present age, and be the means of raising up others, who may eminently deserve that illustrious title, in succeeding generations. 23

SECT. XV.

The Apostle goes on, with admirable address, farther to urge their liberal contribution; and in the full expectation of it,

affectionately recommends them to the Divine blessing.
2 Cor. IX. 1, *throughout.*

2 CORINTHIANS IX. 1.

SECT. XV.

2 Cor. IX. 1.

NOW concerning the ministration intended *to* relieve the necessities of *the saints*, or believing brethren in Judea, *it is superfluous that I should write* largely *to you*, in order to persuade you to the thing itself: it is sufficient that I give you a transient hint concerning the time and manner of doing what is necessary or proper on this occasion. 2 *For I have known* in former instances, and have now again learnt from Titus, *your* extraordinary *readiness* on this head; *which I* indeed *boast concerning you to the Macedonians, that* all the region of *Achaia*, and particularly your church in its capital city, *has been prepared a year ago; and your zeal* in this respect *hath quickened many* others to imitate your example, and do more generously than perhaps they might otherwise 3 have done. *Nevertheless, I have sent* unto you *the brethren* I mentioned before; *lest our boasting of you on this head, that, as I said, ye were prepared* before, having made up your sum, *should*, by any accident which might have prevented your accomplishing the whole of your design, in any degree *be made vain*, and appear 4 ill-grounded: *Lest if any of the Macedonians happen to come with me, and* after all, *find you unprepared*, the money which has been subscribed not being actually collected, *we may be ashamed, not to say you also, in this confident boasting* we have used concerning you, and which may recoil in a very unhappy manner, if 5 it be not answered. *Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren* I have mentioned, *that they should come to you* some time *before* my arrival, *and should first complete your bounty which had been spoken of before*[a] so largely to them; *that* so on the whole, *it may be* entirely

2 COR. IX. 1. FOR as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:

2 For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

3 Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf: that, as I said, ye may be ready:

4 Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might

[a] *Your bounty which had been spoken of before.*] We render προκατηγγελμενην *whereof ye had notice before.* But I suppose it refers to St. Paul's having spoken of it to the Macedonian Christians, verse 2.—I think πλεονεξια here signifies a kind of *extortion*, by which money is as it were, wrung from covetousness, by such *obstinacy* as covetous people themselves use where their own gain is concerned; and thus it is opposed to ευλογια, what is *readily* given, and comes, as it were, with a *blessing*.

be ready, as *a matter of* bounty, and not as *of* covetousness.

ready, and may appear, *as* what I doubt not but it is, the effect of free and cheerful *bounty, and not* look *like* a sort of *extortion*, wrung from you by mere dint of importunity. *And as to this*, it is an important maxim, which I could wish that Christians might always keep in mind, That *he who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he who soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully:* God will bestow rewards, proportionable to what is given, and to the temper from which it proceeds. With this hint, I leave it to every one to judge for himself, what he shall give, and how much seed he shall throw into this grateful and fruitful soil.

SECT. XV.

2 Cor. IX. 6.

6 But this I *say*, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver.

7 Whatever it be, more or less, let it be given with a good will, and a good grace; *every man as he chooseth in his own heart, not as* proceeding *from grief or necessity*, as if he were sorry to part with his money, and were laid under a kind of constraint to do it; *for God loveth a cheerful giver:* and nothing that is contributed, can possibly be acceptable to him without that truly liberal disposition.

8 And God *is* able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

8 *And* lest you should fear, that your charity should bring you into wants and straits, I intreat you to consider, that *God* [*is*] *able to make all grace* and bounty of every kind *to abound towards you*[b], so that all your liberality shall accrue to your advantage, and you shall be supplied with abundant matter for future charity; *that having always all sufficiency in all things, ye may* go on with new enlargement and vigour of generous resolution, to *abound to every good work*, without finding your circumstances straitened. *As it is written* of the truly liberal and charitable man, (Psal. cxii. 9.) *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor*, and in consequence of this, *his righteousness endureth for ever:* he shall always have something to bestow.

9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

9

10 Now he that

10 We observe, in the course of Divine Providence, that God blesseth the increase of the earth so largely, as to suffice for the plentiful

[b] *All grace to abound*, &c.] Some, by χάρις, understand such liberal providential supplies as should furnish out matter of future liberalities; but the more extensive sense I have given it, prevents that appearance of a tautology in the following clause, which might on that limited interpretation be apprehended.

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2 Cor. IX. 10.

nourishment of men, with a remainder of seed sufficient to furnish the harvest of future years. *And may he, who* thus *supplieth seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply your sowing*[c], *and* largely *increase the productions of your righteousness:* may he so prosper you in all your affairs, that you may have future capacity to exercise that liberal disposition which 11 at present appears in this contribution. And I heartily wish, and pray, that you may go on in this laudable and exemplary course, *being in every thing enriched to all* future bounty to be distributed in the *simplicity* of your hearts, with a single eye to the glory of God, and the good of your brethren: *which,* in the instance wherein it has already prevailed, *worketh by our means thanksgivings towards God,* both in us who are your almoners to distribute it, and in 12 those indigent Christians who receive it. *For the ministration* and management *of this service*[d], which we have undertaken, and in which we do, as it were, officiate for you in the presentation of this acceptable offering, *doth not only supply the necessities of the saints, but aboundeth, through the thanksgivings of many* which it oc- 13 casions, *to* the glory of *God:* Of many I say, *Who by the experience of this ministration,* this generous contribution, *are glorifying God on account of that subjection to the gospel of Christ which you profess*[e], *and the simplicity* and liberality *of your communication towards them, and towards all* others, who are in necessity, and 14 whom you have an opportunity of relieving. *And* while they thus glorify God on your account, they are constant and fervent *in their prayers for you, who long after you*[f], and wish earnestly to see

ministereth seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12 But the administration of the service, not only supplieth the wants of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

13 (Whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;)

14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for

[c] *He who supplieth—bread for food, supply and multiply,* &c.] This translation is exactly literal, and gives an easier sense than our English version. There should be a comma, as Beza justly observes, after εις βρωσιν, agreeably to the rendering of the Syriac and Arabic. See Beza in loc. and Wolf. who refers to Isa. lv. 10.

[d] *This service.*] This use of the word λειτουργια intimates, that it was to be considered, not merely as an act of *humanity,* but of *religion,* most pleasing to God, and suitable to the nature of the *gospel* *dispensation.* Compare Heb. xiii. 16.

[e] *That subjection to the gospel of Christ which you profess.*] Επι τῃ ὑποταγῃ της ὁμολογιας ὑμων εις το ευαγγελιον, expresses not merely *a professed subjection to the gospel,* but a *real* subjection to the *gospel* which was *professed;* which sense I thought it necessary to preserve by a change in the version.

[f] *And in their prayers,* &c.] The construction of the original is something perplexed here; and indeed I hardly know any text in the Greek Testament which

SECT. XV.

2 Cor. IX. 15.

the exceeding grace of God in you.

and know you, *on account of the exceeding grace of God which is in you*, and which produces fruits so highly ornamental to Christianity.

15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

When I think of these things, I desire sincerely to bless God on your account, for all the grace he hath given you, and for all the usefulness with which he is pleased to honour you. But I would trace up all to what is indeed the fountain of all his other mercies to us, his having bestowed upon us his dear and only begotten Son. *Thanks*, daily and everlasting thanks, [*be*] ascribed *to* our Father and our *God, for* that *his unutterable gift*,[g] of the excellence, importance, and grace, of which neither men nor angels can worthily speak, or conceive.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 15

HAPPY shall we be, if we learn this pious and evangelical turn of thought; if by all the other gifts of God we are thus led up to the first and greatest gift of his love and mercy. From that surely we may encourage our hopes, of whatever else is necessary and desirable; *for he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*, how is it possible, that he should not be ready, *with him, freely to give us all things* that are truly good for us!

2

Let us observe with pleasure the happy address of the apostle; a felicity, not the result of craft, but of that amiable temper that was so natural to him. He pleads the high opinion he had entertained of his Corinthian friends, the honourable things he had said of them; expressing his persuasion of their readiness to give as matter of bounty, not of constraint. He leads them to the inexhaustible store of the Divine liberality, from which they had received their present all; from which he wishes they may re-

15

is more so. But on the whole, I am ready to prefer the reading of δοξαζοντων, instead of δοξαζοντες, (which Chrysostom followed;) and suppose both δοξαζοντων and επιποθουντων, to agree with πολλων, and then the sentence might be rendered, *this ministration produces an abundance of thanksgiving to God from many, who glorify him for your subjection to the gospel*, &c. *and in their prayer*, that is, while they are praying, *for you, earnestly desire to see you*, &c. But the paraphrase here, as in several other places, hath obliged me to break the sentence; which I more readily did, as amidst this perplexity of grammar, the design of the sentence is perfectly plain.

[g] *Unutterable gift.*] If we understand this with Dr. Whitby, in the following sense, "I adore God for this *charitable* "*temper* in you, and other sincere Chris-"tians, by which God is glorified, the "gospel adorned, the poor saints are re-"freshed, and you fitted for an exceed-"ing great reward." It will be as *remarkable* a text as most in the bible, to show, that *every* good affection in the human heart is to be ascribed to a *Divine* influence. I have therefore included this in the paraphrase; but am ready to think the apostle's mind, to which the invaluable *gift* of Christ was so familiar, rather by a strong and natural transition, glanced on *that*.

SECT. XV.

ceive more and more; and this, not that these supplies might be ignobly consumed in self-gratifications, but employed in acts of the noblest beneficence. He represents to them the thanksgiv- Verse 7, 8 ings it had already occasioned to God, the refreshment it ad- 9–12 ministered to the saints, the honour it did to their character and 13 profession, and the esteem and friendship for them which it excited in the minds of those, who, though unacquainted with them, were well affected towards their happiness, in consequence of this honourable specimen of their character. Who could withstand the force of such oratory? No doubt it was effectual to cultivate the temper it applauded, and to add a rich abundance to the fruits of their righteousness.

Let us apply these thoughts suggested for our own instruction, 7 to excite us to abound in acts of liberality, and to present them to God with that cheerfulness which he loves. To him let us continually look, to make *all grace abound unto us;* and seek a 8 *sufficiency in all things* relating to the present life, chiefly that we may *be ready to every good work;* that our liberality may still 9 *endure*, and that the *multiplication of our seed sown may increase the fruits of our righteousness.* To God be the praise of all as- 10 cribed! He ministers seed to the sower; he supplies bread for food; he calls up the blessings of harvest; he insures the advantages of commerce. May we praise him ourselves; and by the ready communication of the good things which he hath given us, 11 to those that want, not only supply their necessities, but give them cause to abundant thanksgiving to God, as well as in prayer for us, while they see and acknowledge that exceeding grace, which is the spring of every generous motion in the human heart; and to which therefore be the glory of all.

SECT. XVI.

Some reflections having been thrown on the Apostle for the mildness of his conduct, as if it proceeded from fear, he here proceeds to assert his apostolical power and authority; cautioning his opponents, that they should not urge him to give too sensible demonstrations of it upon themselves. 2 Cor. X. 1, *throughout.*

2 CORINTHIANS X. 1.

I HAVE just *now* been expressing my confidence and joy in your church in general, as well as my affection to it: but I am sensible there are some among you to whom I cannot speak in such a manner; and with regard to such, *I Paul myself*, the very man whom they have

2 COR. X. 1.

NOW I Paul my-

self, beseech you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence *am* base among you, but being absent am bold toward you.

SECT. XVI. 2 Cor. X. 1.

so often spoken of with contempt and defiance, injured as I am, do yet condescend to *intreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ,* our condescending and compassionate Saviour, that meekness and gentleness which I have learned from his example, and desire to exercise towards the most unreasonable of my enemies; even I, *who* [*am*] according to your representation, and with respect to my person, *when present, humble among you,*[a] and despised for the meanness of my appearance, *but being absent am bold towards you,* and use so much freedom and authority in my letters; *However* I may be reflected upon, and even insulted on this account;

2 But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present, with that confidence wherewith I think to be bold against some which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.

2 *I beseech you,* I say, as you love yourselves, and tender your own comfort and happiness, *that I may not, when I am* next *present,* be obliged by your continued irregularity to *be bold, with that confidence on which* truly *I think to presume with respect to some who account of us as* persons *walking in the flesh,* and affect at least to talk, though they have so little excuse for doing it, as if we governed ourselves by low and mercenary views.

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

3 *For* we are conscious to ourselves, that, *though we* do indeed *walk in the flesh,* though we inhabit mortal bodies, and are obliged in some respects to stoop to the care of them, and to do many things for their subsistence, which take up the time we could much more agreeably spend another way; yet God knows, *we do not* manage that important *war* in which we are engaged, *according to the flesh,* by carnal methods, or with worldly and interested views.[b]

4 (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but

4 This you may easily perceive, by the manner in which we are armed; *for the weapons of our warfare* [*are*] *not carnal:* as we depend not on military force, so neither on beauty, stature, eloquence,

[a] *When present, am humble among you.*] Probably they had upbraided, and reflected upon him in some such language as this; but there was a sense in which he was indeed lowly among them, his presence probably having nothing majestic.

[b] *Though we walk in the flesh, &c.*] Mr. Cradock explains this something differently, "Though we are not free from "a mixture of human infirmities, yet I "do not exercise my apostolical power "in a weak manner, as either fearing or "flattering men; but use such spiritual "weapons, as Christian fortitude, zeal, "freedom in speaking the truths of God, "and courage in administering the cen-"sures of the church, which, through "Divine concurrence are very effec-"tual."

SECT. XVI.

2 Cor. x. 4.

or philosophy, or in a word, on any thing which might recommend us to human regard; but *though* destitute of these, we are furnished with others much more valuable, by that Divine power, which would never exert itself for the secular advantage of persons, professing, as we do, to despise the world, and seek for something so much above it, if we were not sincere in our profession, and authorised by him to maintain it. Yes, my brethren, God hath armed us for our warfare, by the miraculous powers of his Holy Spirit; and they are *mighty through God to the demolishing fortifications;* prejudices, and difficulties, that like so many impregnable castles, lay in our way, and yet are battered down, and laid in ruins, by these our spiritual weapons.

5 And thus we go on in our conquest; for we are continually *casting down* the fallacious and sophistical *reasonings* by which vain men are endeavouring to expose our doctrine to contempt, *and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,* all the proud imaginations which men have entertained of themselves with regard to their natural or moral excellencies, in consequence of which they neglect the gospel, and are indeed ready to live without God in the world. *And* thus we are enabled *to bring every thought,* every proud haughty notion, which men have entertained, *into* an humble and willing *captivity*[c] *to the obedience of Christ,* the great Captain of our salvation. *And* as God is pleased thus to cause us to triumph in Christ, with regard to the opposition made by the professed enemies of the gospel, so let men regard us, as persons *having it in readiness,* by miraculous powers and penalties inflicted by them, *to avenge all disobedience,* to chastise and punish the obstinacy of those who under a Christian profession pretend to oppose us; *now your obedience is fulfilled,* and the sounder part of your church recovered to its due order and subjection.

mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

[c] *Every thought into captivity.*] The soul, seeing its fortifications demolished, submits to the conqueror; and then every thought, every reason, takes law from him. Nothing is admitted that contradicts the gospel; Christ being acknowledged as absolute Master. The former clause shews how ready men are to fortify themselves against it, and to raise, as it were, one barrier behind another, to obstruct his entrance into the soul. Compare Rom. xv. 18, 19.

SECT. XVI.

2 Cor. X. 7.

7 Do ye look at things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that as he *is* Christ's even so *are* we Christ's.

This is indeed the case, and I beseech you to consider it as it is. *Do you look at the outward appearance of things?* Do you judge of a man by his person, or address, or by any one particular of his life? Surely you ought not to do it. *If any man be confident in himself, that he is Christ's, let him again bethink himself of this,* which he will see evident reason to acknowledge, if he candidly and seriously examine, *that as he* [*is*] *Christ's, so we also* [*are*] *Christ's;* nor can any one produce more convincing proofs of Christ's calling him to the ministry, and approving his discharge of it, than myself.

8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, (which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction,) I should not be ashamed:

8 *For if I should boast something yet more,* abundantly more than I have ever yet done, *concerning our* apostolical *authority, which* I am sensible *the Lord hath given us for* the *edification* of the church, *and not for your destruction,* or the injury of any particular person, *I should not* have any reason to *be ashamed,* having already used it in a manner agreeable to its design.

9 That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.

9 And this I say, *that I may not seem as if I would* by any means *terrify you with* my *epistles,* threatening more than I can perform; on the contrary, I might pretend to much more than I have done, and to execute, if need should require it, much greater severities in a way of miraculous punishment.[d]

10 For *his* letters (say they) *are* weighty and powerful, but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible.

10 And the hint is necessary; *for* I know there are some among you that would represent matters quite in a different light. [*His*] *epistles, say they,* [*are*] *indeed weighty and strong, but* [*his*] *bodily presence* [*is*] *weak, and* [*his*] *speech despicable;*[e] for which indeed they have some excuse, as to my person, and the disadvantages attending my utterance.

11 Let such an one think this, that such as we are in word by letters when, we are absent, such *will we*

11 But *let such an one,* whoever he be, *reckon upon this* as a certain fact, *that such as we are in word by* our *letters, when absent,*

[d] Miraculous punishment.] It is to be remembered it was before this time that the apostle had smitten Elymas with blindness; and it is highly probable from this text, and others of the like nature, that some other miracles of this awful kind had been wrought by him, though they are not recorded in scripture.

[e] *Speech despicable.*] Chrysostom, Nicephorus, and Lucian, or rather the author of the Philopatris, relate of St. Paul, that his stature was low, his body crooked, and his head bald, which seem to be the infirmities here referred to. Some think he had also an *impediment* in his speech; but I do not recollect any ancient testimony to *that;* though it is not improbable. Compare chap. xii. 7, and the note there.

SECT. XVI. 2 Cor. X. 11.

such [*shall we be*] *also when present, in action;* our deeds will fully correspond to our words, and we shall do something to vindicate these pretences, if their speedy reformation do not prevent.

be also in deed when we are present.

12 *For we presume not to number, or to compare ourselves with some who recommend themselves* in very high terms; *but they* thus *measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves,*[f] while they proudly overlook the greatly superior characters and furniture of others, *are not wise,* nor do they indeed take the most effectual measures to raise their own character; but on the contrary, in consequence of this, fall into many absurdities of behaviour from which greater impartiality and modesty, and a better knowledge of men and 13 things, would secure them. *But we* are always careful, that we *glory not* of a distinguished zeal for the gospel carrying us *beyond* [*our*] *bounds, but* only *according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us* under the character of Apostle of the Gentiles, *a measure to come even unto you;* and accordingly we have regularly and gradually advanced towards 14 you, taking intermediate places in our way. *For we do not extend ourselves excessively, as not regularly coming to you;* like some who run abruptly from one church to another, leaving their work unfinished behind them, when they think they have discovered a place where they can meet with a more pleasant and agreeable reception. *For,* as I observed before, *we are,* by a regular progress, *come even unto you in the gospel of Christ,* having faithfully preached in the

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves amongst themselves, are not wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure,* as though we reached not unto you; for we are come as far as to you also, in *preaching* the gospel of Christ;

[f] *Measuring themselves by themselves:* ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἑαυτοὺς μετροῦντες.] Dr. Whitby would render it *measuring themselves by one another;* as if they compared themselves with their false apostles, and grew proud on the degree in which they resemble them in acuteness and eloquence, or other things on which those deceitful teachers valued themselves. But it is more natural to think, that the meaning is, "they looked continually *on themselves,* surveying their own great imaginary furniture, but not considering "the vastly superior abilities of many "others: and so formed a disproportionate opinion of themselves." And this is every where one of the greatest sources of pride. Bos has taken great pains to prove, that to *measure oneself by oneself,* is a phrase which expresses *modesty,* and making a right estimate of ourselves and others; and taking συνιοῦσιν not for a verb, but for the dative of a participle, would render it, *we measure ourselves by ourselves, and compare ourselves with ourselves, not with the wise,* that is, *ironically,* not with such wise men as these. But though this sense be ingeniously defended by that great critic, the other seems most natural.

15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line, of things made ready to our hand.

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

SECT. XVI.

2 Cor. X. 15.

other places that lay in our way. *Not* like those, whom I have had so much reason to complain of, *boasting unmeasurably*, or *in* things beyond my proper measure, not intruding into churches planted by *the labours of others*, where we have no natural and proper call; *but having* an agreeable *hope*, [*that*] *when your faith is increased*, as we trust it will abundantly be, even by the experience of what has lately happened, *we shall according to our rule*, and the constant maxim we lay down to ourselves, *be magnified by you so as to abound* yet more, that is, shall by your countenance and assistance, be enabled to keep on our courses beyond your country into Arcadia, and Lacedæmon, or whithersoever else Providence may lead us. For this is greatly in our 16 hearts, if God shall smile upon our purposes, *to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you*[g], [*and*] *not to boast in another man's province*[h], or *rule*, *in things made ready to our hand*, as some who are very solicitous about their own ease affect to do, and then pride themselves in sowing the ground which others have cleared. *But* after all, *he that boasteth*, whether it be of 17 planting or watering churches, *let him boast* not in himself, but *in* the power and assistance of *the Lord* alone; let every minister remember it is to Christ that he owes all his ability for his work, and all his success in it. *For not he that* 18 *commendeth* himself with the greatest confidence, and in the most florid manner, *is* truly and justly *approved*, *but he whom the Lord commendeth* by the gifts of his Spirit, and by a blessing on his ministry. Let those therefore who are so ready to applaud themselves and each

g *In the regions beyond you.*] It would certainly have been a great pleasure to the apostle to have gone on to Arcadia, and Lacedæmon, and to have preached the gospel where he had been so long celebrated in the latter of these places, for their valour and magnanimity, and in the former for their wit and poetry in those agreeable and rural retreats. But we do not read any thing in the New Testament, of planting Christian churches in these parts of the Peloponnesus.

h *In another man's province, &c.*] The apostle did indeed go to places *already* converted to confirm and establish his brethren in the faith, but this was chiefly where he had himself planted churches, though he might take some others in his way, which it would have been affectation and disrespect, rather than modesty to have avoided. But he did not boast in churches thus visited, as if he were the founder of them, as his opposers probably did, pouring contempt on St. Paul's labours, as if they were hardly to be called Christian churches, which he had left, as they pretended, in so unformed and unfinished a state.

SECT. XVI. 2 Cor. X. 18.

other, think of this, and learn to be more solicitous than they are, about approving their fidelity to their great Master, whether they be more or less regarded by their fellow-servants.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1 MAY the *meekness and gentleness of Christ* ever be remembered by all his servants, and especially by his ministers, to whom, both under their public and private characters it will be of so great importance to imitate it. Their calling is indeed high and holy; let their behaviour in it be so much the more 3 humble. And let it be their great care, that while they walk in the flesh, they do not war after it. Still, though disarmed of that miraculous power with which the apostles were endowed, 4 are the weapons of their warfare mighty. They have the scripture-magazine ever at hand, from whence they may be furnished with them; and may humbly hope, that the Spirit of God will render them effectual to the *pulling down strong holds*, and 5 abasing every proud *imagination which exalteth itself against the obedience of God.* May every thought of their own hearts be in the first place thus subdued, and brought into a sweet and willing captivity! So shall these their captives, thus conquered, prove as so many faithful soldiers to fight for him, against whom they once were foolishly rebelling. And may they succeed in this holy war, till the empire of our Divine Master become universal, and the happiness of mankind universal with it!

To promote this, let us pray, that ministers may always remember, that whatever authority they have given them, is for 7-11 edification, and not for destruction; and may learn from that moderation with which the apostle used his miraculous powers, in how gentle and candid a manner they should behave themselves in their far inferior stations; never making their pre-eminence in the church the instrument of their own resentment, or of any other sinful or selfish passion; but ever solicitous to subserve the interest of our great Lord in all, and desirous to keep up their own character and influence, chiefly for his sake.

12-16 May they in no instance *boast beyond their proper measure*; and while they are ready like St. Paul, to meet all the most laborious scenes of service, let them *glory not in themselves, but in the Lord.* This is a lesson we are all to learn. And whatever our stations in life are, let us resolutely and constantly 17, 18 guard against that self-flattery by which we may be ready to commend ourselves, in instances in which we may be least approved by him, whose favour alone is worthy of our ambition, and by whose judgment, in the day of final account, we must *stand* or *fall*.

SECT. XVII.

The Apostle farther vindicates himself from the perverse insinuations of them that opposed him at Corinth; particularly on the head of his having declined to receive a contribution from this church, for his maintenance. 2 Cor. XI. 1—15.

2 COR. XI. 1.
WOULD to God you could bear with me a little in *my* folly, and indeed bear with me.

2 CORINTHIANS XI. 1.

SECT. XVII. — 2 Cor. XI. 1.

I WOULD advise every man, as I have hinted, to be sparing in his own commendation, and to study above all to approve himself to Christ; and yet in present circumstances, *I wish you would bear with a little of* [*my*] *folly*, that you would permit a little of that boasting which I know generally to be foolish; *and indeed* I must intreat you to *bear with me* in what may look this way, considering the manner in which I am urged to it, and brought under an unwilling necessity.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ.

2 *For I am jealous over you with* what I trust I may call *a godly jealousy*, and feel the warmest and most zealous desires, *that I may present* [*you as*] *a chaste virgin to Christ*;[a] *for I have* by successfully preaching the gospel to you, and bringing you into the engagements of the Christian covenant, in effect *espoused you to one husband*,[b] even to him under the character of his servant and ambassador, I have led you into a holy contract with him, which hath been mutually sealed. I am therefore exceedingly concerned, that you may maintain a pure and loyal heart, to him who has condescended to take you into so dear and intimate a relation.

3 But I fear lest by

3 And I am the more solicitous about this, as I know what insinuating enemies are endeavouring to corrupt you: *for I fear lest by any means, as* in the first seduction and ruin of mankind,

[a] *That I may present you*, &c.] This is much illustrated by a recollection that there was an officer among the Greeks, whose business it was to educate and form young women, especially those of rank and figure, designed for *marriage*, and then to *present* them to those who were to be their *husbands*; and if this officer permitted them, through negligence to be corrupted, between the espousals and consummation of the marriage, great blame would naturally fall upon him.

[b] *For I have espoused you.*] This clause, ἡρμοσαμην γαρ ὑμας ενι ανδρι, may be considered as a *parenthesis*; and therefore in the paraphrase, I have transposed it, that the construction may appear; ζηλω ὑμας παραστησαι, *I am jealous*, &c.—*that I may present you*, &c.

SECT. XVII.

2 Cor. XI. 3.

the serpent deceived Eve,[c] our common mother, *by his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from* that *simplicity* which should always be in us *towards Christ,*[d] and which the adulterous mixtures which some are endeavouring to introduce among you, would greatly injure.

4 *For if he that cometh* among you with such extraordinary pretences, *preach another Jesus,* as a Saviour, *whom we have not preached;* if he can point out another Christ who shall equally deserve your attention and regard; *or [if] ye receive* by his preaching *another spirit, which ye have not* yet *received,* which can bestow upon you gifts superior to those which we have imparted; *or another gospel which ye have not accepted,* the tidings of which shall be equally happy, evident, and important, *ye might well bear with [him,]* and there would be some excuse for your conduct; but how far this is from being, or so much as seeming to be the case, I need

5 not say at large. Nor will you, I am sure, maintain any such thing; *for I reckon* upon most certain knowledge, that I was so far from being inferior in my discourses, or miracles, to these your favourite teachers, *that I did not in any respect, fall short of the greatest of the apostles;* but gave you as evident and convincing proofs of a Divine mission as any church has ever re-

6 ceived from any one of them. *For if [I am] unskilful in speech,* using plain and unpolished language like that of a man of the most ordinary education;[e] *nevertheless [I am] not so in*

any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh, preached another Jesus whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit which ye have not received, or another gospel which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him.*

5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though I be rude in speech, yet

[c] *Lest as the serpent deceived Eve, &c.*] From the instance to which this is applied, viz. that of the false apostles, whose subtilty did not consist so much in crafty arguments, as in false *appearances,* by which they put on the outward forms of the apostles of Christ; Mr. Rymer infers, (especially comparing verse 14.) that the subtilty of Satan, when he deceived Eve, consisted in putting on the appearance of an *angel of light,* or pretending to be one of the Seraphims that attended on the Schechinah. (Rymer on Rev. p. 79.) But I think that if it had been ever so expressly said by Moses, that the *deception* lay, as it very probably might, in pretending to have received the faculty of reason and speech, though a brute, by eating the fruit, he proposed to her, it might be said in the general, that the false apostles deceived their followers, as Satan deceived Eve, that is, by false pretences and insinuations.

[d] *Simplicity towards Christ:* ἁπλότητος τῆς εἰς τὸν Χριστόν.] This implies an entire undivided *devotedness* to Christ, as the great husband Christians should desire to please, and from whom they are to receive law; and is with peculiar propriety opposed to that mixture of Judaism which some were endeavouring to bring in among the Corinthians.

[e] *Unskilful in speech.*] Ἰδιώτης properly signifies a *private man,* one that can speak

2 Cor. XI. 6.

not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things.

knowledge of the gospel of Christ, and the Divine dispensations which were introductory to it. *But in every respect we have been manifest to you in all things,* every one of you has had a proof of this, as you received the gospel from me, and therefore ought not to question my abilities, nor to prefer another in opposition to me.

7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself, that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

7 Nothing can be more ungenerous and unreasonable, than to insinuate, that I have renounced my claim to being an apostle, by declining that maintenance which my brethren generally think it reasonable to take from the people among whom they labour, and which while employed for them they may indeed reasonably expect. *Have I* then *committed an offence, in humbling myself* to the daily cares and toils of a tent-maker, *that you may* more effectually *be exalted* to the dignity of those who know and believe in Christ? Is this, after all, the crime, *that I have preached the gospel of God to you at free cost?*

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages *of them,* to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia, supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself.*

8 *I* may almost, in this sense, be said to *have robbed other churches;* so freely have I received from them, at least *taking wages,* as it were, [*of them,*] *for waiting upon you;* for indeed I received a kind of stipend from them, while I abode at Corinth, (Phil. iv. 15.) 9 *And when I was in want, while present* with you, *I was chargeable to no* one *man*[f] of your society, when incapable of maintaining myself, as before: *for what was deficient to me,* in this respect, *the* Christian *brethren who came from Macedonia, supplied:* (Phil. iv. 10.) *and in all things I have kept, and* so long as God shall enable me, *I will keep myself from being burdensome to you.*

no better than the generality of his neighbours, being unformed by the rules of eloquence. And this is consistent with that great natural pathos which we find in the apostle's writings; so that there is no need of recurring, as Dr. Whitby here does, to the supposed impediment in his speech, which allowing it ever so certain a fact, could not properly be expressed by this phrase. The good Archbishop of Cambray hath a very pertinent observation on this expression, in his excellent Dialogues of Eloquence, (p. 136.) viz. that this might well be the case, though St. Paul shared so largely in the gift of tongues; as when he was at Tarsus, he probably learnt a corrupt kind of Greek, spoken by the inhabitants of this place; for we have reason to believe, that as for any of the languages which the apostles had learnt in a natural way, the Spirit left them to speak as before.

[f] *Chargeable to no man:* ου κατεναρκησα ουδενος.] Beza would render it, *I was not idle at any man's expence.* The word ναρκη implies a *benumbed inactive state,* a kind of *torpor,* to which no man seems to be less obnoxious than St. Paul.

SECT. XVII. 2 Cor. XI. 10.

And this in some measure I value myself upon; so that *as the truth of Christ is in me, this boast shall not be violated*, nor this rule broke in upon *with respect to me*, at Corinth, or *in* all *the regions of Achaia.*

11 And *why* is it that I insist upon this? Is it *because I love you not*, and therefore am unwilling to be under any obligation to you? *God knows* the contrary, that you have a large share in my tenderest affections and cares; yea, that it was my desire of serving you more effectually, that subjected me to these mortifications and self-denials; for such they undoubtedly were.

12 *But what I do* in this respect, *I will* continue to *do, that I may cut off occasion from them who* greatly *desire* an *occasion* to reflect upon me, *that in* [*the thing of*] *which they* are so ready to *boast, they may be found even as we.*[g] I would teach them by my example, instead of boasting, that they have such an influence over you, as procures them a plentiful, and perhaps splendid maintenance, that they rather emulate my disinterested conduct, and subsist on their own labours. But I know they have no inward principle to bear them through such hardships.

13 *For such*, whatever they pretend, [*are*] *false apostles*, destitute of that Divine mission which animates our spirits to do, or to bear, whatever we meet in the course of our duty; and indeed they are *deceitful workers*, whatever pains they may seem to take in their employment; *transforming themselves* artfully *into* the appearance of *apostles of Christ* by counterfeit forms, which they may put on for a while, but which they can with no consistency long support.

14 *And* [*it is*] *no wonder*, they assume them for a time; *for Satan himself*, in subordination to whom they act, can put on such deceitful appearances, and wear upon occasion such a mask of sanctity and religion in his attempts, that he *is*, as it were, *transformed into an angel of light*, and one would imagine his suggestions to be of a celestial and

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

[g] *They might be found*, &c.] The Jews had a maxim among them, "that it was "better for their wise men to skin beasts "for a living, than to ask a mainte- "nance from the generosity of those "whom they taught." But it plainly appears, that whatever the false apostles might boast upon this head, there was no foundation for it. Compare verse 20, and 1 Cor. ix. 12.

15 Therefore *it is* no great thing, if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

SECT. XVII. 2 Cor. XI. 15.

Divine original. *Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also*, under his influence, *be transformed as ministers of righteousness; whose end* nevertheless *shall be*, not according to their specious pretences, but *according to their works*; for they will find that God, upon whose judgment their final state depends, is not to be imposed upon by any of their artifices.

IMPROVEMENT.

How adorable is the condescension of the blessed Jesus, who amidst all the exalted glories of his heavenly kingdom, is so graciously uniting souls to himself; espousing them in bonds of everlasting love, that they may be for ever near him, and receive the most endearing communications of his favour. Much should we all be concerned that we may have the honour and blessings of such an alliance; that being by profession solemnly espoused to him, we may in the day of the *marriage of the Lamb, be presented chaste* and spotless. How vigilant should they be who are intrusted by him to treat with souls about these espousals! How solicitous, that they may succeed, and may so *present them to Christ!* (Verse 2)

Still is that crafty serpent, whose malignant breath so soon tainted our common mother, and all our happiness, by his subtilty, labouring to corrupt our minds from the simplicity of true Christianity. Let us be incessantly watchful against the artful deceiver; remembering that his works and designs of darkness may sometimes be veiled as under the robes of *an angel of light*, and *his ministers transformed as ministers of righteousness. Be therefore sober and vigilant*, since your adversary the devil adds the wiliness of the old serpent, to the rage and cruelty of the roaring lion, and by both subserves his purposes of betraying, or devouring the souls of men. (3; 14, 15)

Let us therefore *with a godly jealousy be jealous* over each other, and especially over ourselves; and after the example of the apostle, be peculiarly so, when we are compelled to say any thing to our own advantage. Let us endeavour to arm ourselves against every surrounding danger, by a growing regard to the writings of this excellent man, who, though rude in speech, was so far from being in any degree deficient in Christian knowledge, that he was not behind the very chief of the apostles. There are those that preach another gospel: but can they point out another Jesus, another all-sufficient Saviour? can they direct us to another Spirit? Let us hold fast the doctrine we learn from his faithful pen: let us follow the exhortations we receive from his experienced heart; and be ever ready to imitate him in that resolute self-denial which he exercised, and that glorious superiority (2; 6; 5; 4; 9)

SECT. XVII. to every other interest which he always shewed, where the interests of Christ and of souls were concerned. *So shall we cut off occasion from them that seek occasion against us, and secure* a far greater happiness, in the conscious reflection of our own minds, as well as the expectation of a future reward, than the greatest abundance of this world could have given us, or any present advantage to which we could have sacrificed the views of conscience and honour.

Verse 12

SECT. XVIII.

Farther to assert his right as an apostle, St. Paul commemorates his labours and sufferings in the cause of Christ; yet in such a manner, as plainly to shew how disagreeable it was to him, so much as to seem to applaud himself, on the most necessary occasion. 2 Cor. XI. 16, *to the end.*

2 CORINTHIANS XI. 16.

SECT. XVIII. 2 Cor. XI. 16.

I HAVE said some things, which may seem more to the advantage of my character, than a man would wish any thing, which comes from his own lips, or pen, should appear. But *again I* must *say, Let no man think me* to be so *foolish* in this boasting, as to take any pleasure in commending myself. Let the provocation I have received be considered; let the necessity of the circumstance, and the importance of my character, be duly weighed; and you will surely excuse it. *But if* it must be *otherwise* censured, I will run the risk, and beseech you, if you think me foolish in it, *as foolish however, to receive* and bear with *me*, as well as others, *that I may* in my turn at least, *boast some small matter.*

17 *What I speak* on this head, *I speak not after the Lord,* not by any immediate direction or inspiration from Christ; nor is it so evidently in his Spirit as I could wish, or so apparently conformable to that example of modesty and humility which he hath set us: *but* I speak it, *as it were, foolishly in this confidence of boasting;*[a] on which

2 COR. XI. 16. I SAY again, Let no man think me a fool, if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak *it* not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly in this confidence of boasting.

[a] *Foolishly in this confidence of boasting.*] It seems indeed not very just and natural, to interpret this, as spoken by immediate suggestion; yet, it being in present circumstances very proper the apostle should speak *thus*, the Holy Spirit might by a general, though unperceived, influence, lead him into this tract of thought and expression; and though such apologies might seem beneath the dignity of an apostle's character, yet that very condescension is an excellent and most useful example of humility to all Christians, and especially to ministers.

account I return to this subject again with some sensible regret. Yet lest my silence should be attended with still worse consequences, I think myself obliged, though with strong reluctance, to say, *seeing many boast according to the flesh,* in circumcision and Jewish extraction, *I also will boast* as well as they: and truly were I disposed to do it on these topics, you well know that no man could say more than I.

SECT. XVIII. 2 Cor. XI. 18

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise,

19 *And* by the way, *you may well bear with foolish people, since you [yourselves] are* so wondrous *wise*, and in that abundant wisdom can cherish that arrogant temper in others, and second it with your high applause. Nay, indeed you go farther than that, and not only endure to hear your admired teachers make very indecent encomiums upon themselves, but tamely submit to them, while they invade your property, and tyrannize over you in a most arbitrary and scandalous manner. *For*, by what I can learn of the temper of some among you in that respect, and of your fond infatuation in their favour, it seems that *you bear it*, patiently, *if a man enslave you*, and even trample upon your liberty, *if he devour [you]* by his exorbitant demands, *if he* take and *seize [on your possessions,] if he exalt himself* as if he were your supreme and absolute sovereign, *if* his mad passion were to transport him even to blows, and *he* were to *smite you on the face,*[b] your fondness for him would prevent your calling him to a just account, and you would find some way of excusing, or accommodating the affair, rather than come to a breach with him.

20 For ye suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour *you*, if a man take *of you*, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 *Do I speak this by way of dishonour*, from an envious desire to derogate from my superiors, and so bring them down to my own level; *as if we ourselves were weak* in comparison with them, and therefore have not the courage to attempt such freedoms as they take? There can *surely* be no reason to suspect that; for be they ever

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been

[b] *Smite you on the face.*] As one can hardly imagine, that the false apostles would run all these lengths, (though Dr. Whitby well observes, that the high conceit which the Jews had of their superiority over the Gentiles, might lead them to great insolence of behaviour,) I chose to paraphrase the words in such a latitude as might wave the severity of the most literal interpretation.

SECT. XVIII. 2 Cor. XI. 21

so puffed up with their external privileges, I would have them to know, that *in whatever any one else may be confident* in these respects, though *I speak it* indeed *in folly, I also am confident*, and on their own terms could match, or even exceed them. *Are they* for instance, *Hebrews* by language, capable of consulting the scriptures in the original, with all the advantage which a familiar acquaintance with that tongue from their childhood can give them? *so* [*am*] *I*: *Are they Israelites* by birth, not descended from Esau, or any other branch of the family, but that on which the blessing was entailed? *so* [*am*] *I* likewise. *Are they of the seed of Abraham*, both by the father's and mother's side, not proselytes, or of mingled descent? *so* [*am*] *I*; and can trace up as fair and clear a genealogy, through the tribe of Benjamin, to the father of the faithful.

22

23 Or if they would boast in a manner more peculiarly referring to the gospel; *are they ministers of Christ? I* may seem to *speak foolishly* in this boasting manner, which is so unnatural to me; I cannot forbear repeated apologies for it; but I will venture to say here, that *I* [*am*] *more* so than they: so far more than an ordinary minister, that I am a chosen apostle, dignified and distinguished from many of my brethren by more eminent services: *more abundant in labours* now for a long series of years: *exceeding* them *in* the frequent *stripes* I have received on account of my singular zeal: *more abundant in imprisonments*, cheerfully resigning my liberty for the sake of Christ and his gospel; and *often in deaths*, which are continually surrounding me in the most horrible forms; but which, by Divine grace, I have learnt to meet and to vanquish in all their terrors, animated by love to my Divine Leader.

24 I certainly have endured more blows than any of them in his cause; for *of the Jews I have five times received*, in their synagogues and before their courts of judgment, *forty* [*stripes*] *save one*, according to the precautions which they use, that they may not transgress the precept of their law, which limits them to that

25 number. (Deut. xxv. 3.) And *thrice was I beaten with rods* by the Roman lictors, or

weak: howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold, I (speak foolishly) I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so *am* I: are they Israelites? so *am* I: are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) I *am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes*, save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods,

once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by *mine own* countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in

beadles, at the command of their superior magistrates. I have reason to say, I have been in greater danger of death than any of them; for *once*, at Lystra, *I was stoned*, and left for dead in the place; nor had I been recovered but by miracle. (Acts xiv. 19.) *Thrice I have been shipwrecked*[c], and escaped with the utmost difficulty from the rage of the waves; at one of which times I was reduced to such extremity, that *I passed a day and a night in the deep*[d], floating on the remainder of the wreck, and just on the point of being washed away, and sunk, every moment. On the whole, I have been 26 *in journies often*, where I have not only been exposed to fatigues, but to great hazard from wild beasts, as well as from unreasonable and wicked men. I have also been *in* frequent *dangers from* the depths and rapidity of several *rivers*[e], which I have been obliged to pass; I have also been *in danger from* the assaults of *robbers*, who have lain in wait for me with a design to plunder and murder me. I have often been *in dangers from* [*my own*] *countrymen*, the Jews; who forgetting the mutual ties of relation by blood, birth, and religion, have attempted my life with unsatiable rage, cruelly hunting me from place to place, as if I had been some beast of prey: *in dangers from the heathen;* who have often been stirred up by the Jews, as well as offended by the testimony I have been obliged to bear against their idolatries. Every place through which I have passed has indeed been a scene of perils, and often of great extremities; so that I have been *in dangers in the city* of Jerusalem, and other cities: *in dangers in*

[c] *Thrice have I been shipwrecked.*] The wreck at Malta happened long after; and therefore must at least have been the *fourth:* and had the inhabitants known it to be so, they would have been confirmed in their suspicions of his being a very bad man; but this remarkably shews us a series of what the world calls misfortunes, from the hand of Providence, may befal the best and worthiest of mankind.

[d] *Passed a day and a night in the deep.*] Νυχθημερον, (rendered *a day* and *a night*) signifies a *natural day*, including the hours of light and darkness. Βυθος, the word here used, and rendered, *in the deep*, was indeed the name of a deep *dungeon*, at Cyzicum, in the Propontis; and Dr. Hammond conjectures, that St. Paul was cast into it, as he passed from Troas to that city; but I think the other interpretation most easy and natural.

[e] *In dangers from rivers.*] To render ποταμων, *waters*, as we do, is confounding *these hazards* with those he endured in the *sea*, in a very improper manner.

SECT. XVIII.

2 Cor XI. 26.

the wilderness, while laboriously traversing many dreary and inhospitable deserts in pursuit of my apostolical work: *in dangers of the sea;* where I have encountered many a storm, besides those in which, as I observed before, I suffered shipwreck; and where I have sometimes been beset by pirates: And though it be shameful to say it, yet it is most certainly true, that I have frequently been *in* very formidable *dangers among false brethren*[f], who, amidst all the most specious pretensions of love and affection, have been secretly watching for opportunities to expose, and, if possible, to destroy me; or at least to ruin my usefulness, still dearer to me than my life.

the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren.

27 I have been for a long series of years engaged *in strenuous labour, and* fatiguing *toil*[g], almost incessant; so that the end of one has presently been the beginning of another: I have been, *in watchings, often* obliged to add the fatigues of the night to those of the day, either in extraordinary devotion, which hath kept mine eyes waking, while others have slept; or in preaching to those who have pressed in upon me to hear the gospel as privately as possible; or by corresponding with Christian churches who needed my advice, by which I have lost the rest of many nights in my long journies; or *in* other circumstances into which Providence hath called me. I have often known what *hunger and thirst* mean, have been *in fastings often*, not having had even the necessaries of life at hand. And at the same time, I have frequently been exposed to the severity of rigorous seasons, *in cold and* even *nakedness* too[h]; not having convenient clothing to cover me, or comfortable habitation to repose myself in.

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness

28 All this, *beside foreign affairs*, that daily combination, that

28 Besides those

[f] *False brethren.*] Perhaps he mentions these *last* as apprehending peculiar danger from their efforts among the Corinthians.

[g] *In labour and toil.*] The latter of the words here used μοχθ𝔬ς, is more expressive than the former κοπ𝔬ς. It signifies not only strenuous labour, but such as proceeds to a degree of *fatigue*.

[h] *Cold and nakedness.*] What an idea does this give us of the *apostle's fidelity and zeal!* It is to die warm in a good and noble cause. How hard was it for a man of a genteel and liberal education, as St. Paul was, to bear such rigours, and to wander about like a vagabond, hungry, and almost naked, yet coming into the presence of persons of high life, and speaking in large and various assemblies on matters of the utmost importance.

things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

does, as it were, make up an assembly, *the care of all the churches* abroad, whose concerns are *rushing in upon me every day*,[i] with such impetuosity, that they sometimes are ready not only to confound, but to overbear me. Nor am I concerned only for whole communities, but for particular persons too, as soon as their circumstances are known to me; so that I may say, *Who is weak, and I am not weak* too? Like a tenderly compassionate friend, I feel my own spirits ready to fail, when I see my brethren sink around me. *Who is offended*, so as to be led into sin by the rashness and uncharitableness of others, *and I am not*, as it were, *fired* with grief and indignation, to see such dishonour brought upon religion, and with zeal, if possible, to redress the grievance?[k]

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

30 *If it is necessary to boast*, and I am heartily sorry that it is, *I will* however, *boast of* those *things which relate to my infirmities*; as I know this tenderness of temper, that so often weeps and trembles, and glows with such strong emotions, on what some may think trivial occasions, will be esteemed by them; yet of these only, and of those sufferings which shew the weakness of human nature, and my need of support from Christ; of these alone have I hitherto presumed to speak: nor do I feign, or aggravate any thing.

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

31 Far from that, *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, even he, the Eternal Majesty of heaven and earth, *who is ever blessed, knoweth that I do not lie*, or in any degree transgress the strictest boundaries of truth.

32 In Damascus

32 And I cannot forbear adding one circumstance more, to illustrate the early dangers to which I was exposed, as soon as I engaged in the Christian cause, and the remarkable interposition of

[i] *Rushing in upon me every day.*] The original phrase is very emphatical, η επισυςασις μυ ή καθ' ἡμεραν. Επισυςασις properly signifies a *tumult* or crowd of people rising up against a man at once, and ready to bear him down. This, the version I have given, hints at better than our own, which neither expresses *number* nor *violence*. But there is still an imperfection which I endeavoured as well as I could, to supply by the paraphrase. Mr. Saurin would render it, *what besieges me daily*. Saurin's Serm. vol. X. p. 163. Edit. 1749.

[k] *Who is offended, and I am not fired?*] So πυρυμαι properly signifies. It may perhaps, in this connection, allude to the sudden *hurry of spirits* into which a man is put by the dangerous fall of a person he tenderly loves, especially when occasioned by the carelessness and folly of another.

SECT. VIII. 2 Cor. XI. 32. Providence in my favour, which I would never forget. I mean, that when I was *in Damascus*[1] about three years after my conversion, *the governor*, or ethnarch, *under King Aretas, set a guard at* every gate of *the city of the Damascenes, being determined*, if possible, *to seize me;* in compliance with the solicitations of the Jews, who endeavoured by any means to make me odious to the government, and to crush my usefulness in the bud, if not immediately to de-33 stroy my life itself. *And I was let down, through a window, in a basket*, from a house which stood *by the wall* of the city, *and* happily *escaped from his hands:* and by the continued care of the same Providence remain unto this day, and see the many contrivances of my enemies for my destruction, turned into disappointment and shame.

the governor under Aretas the King kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

IMPROVEMENT.

SURELY we have reason to be thankful, in some degree, for Verse that providential permission to which it was owing that this bless-18 ed apostle was brought under the unwilling necessity of boasting; to which his modesty submits with such genuine and becoming regret: we had otherwise lost some very valuable fragments of sacred history, which it becomes us to gather up with respect. We are indeed elsewhere informed, concerning several of his *labours, stripes, and imprisonments*; but how frequent, and *above measure* they were, we had never known, if he had not been urg-23 ed thus to plead them with the Corinthians, and so to represent them to us. What a life was St. Paul's amidst so many injuries and hardships! Land and sea, every country, every city, almost every society of men, seemed to be in a combination against him, to make his life wretched; and amidst all the rigours and 26 severities of *toils and watchings, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness*, he felt, and particularly complained of the treatment he received from *false brethren*. Yet thus surrounded, and as we should from the detail be ready to say, thus overwhelmed, with so many and so various miseries, he was yet happy in the favour of God, in the presence of Christ: unspeakably happy in the cheerful views of approaching glory, and in all that abundant usefulness with which a gracious God was pleased to ho-

[1] *In Damascus*, &c.] This probably happened, not when he was first converted, but when he had preached about three years in Arabia. Compare Acts ix. 23—26. with Gal. i. 16—18.

nour him. Whilst his benevolent heart was pained, it was also comforted; and with *the care of all the churches pressing upon him*, and with all that he felt from particular persons, still was his voice in tune for praise; and he hardly ever begins an epistle, without such a burst of it in some of his first lines, as looks like one of the songs of heaven. O glorious effect of real Christianity, which every inferior minister, yea, and every private Christian, to this day feels, in proportion to the degree in which his character resembles that of this holy champion of our Divine faith!

Verse 28

But O! how unlike his hath been the character of many who have borne themselves highest on their pretended claims to the most extraordinary powers, by a succession from him and his brethren! What tyrannical insults! What exorbitant oppressions! What base methods to enslave the conscience, the properties, and the persons of men, whom they should have respected and loved as their brethren, whom they should have cherished even as their children! So that one would imagine they had taken the picture which St. Paul here draws of the false apostles, as a model of their own conduct; while they have perhaps denied the title of ministers of Christ to those who have much more resembled the dispositions and circumstances of this his most faithful ambassador. O that this might only be the infamy of the Popish clergy, with whose cruel and usurping practices such censures may seem best to suit! Or rather would to God it were no longer even theirs. May *the God* and *Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed for ever more*, pour out a better spirit upon all who profess themselves the servants of his Son! That they, whose business it is to call others to *Christ*, may themselves first come, and learn of him, *who is meek and lowly of heart; whose yoke is so easy, and his burden so light*, that it is astonishing, that any who have themselves felt it, should ever think *of binding on others, burdens heavy and hard to be borne.*

21

23

31

SECT. XIX.

The Apostle goes on with great plainness and freedom, yet at the same time with great modesty, to give an account of some extraordinary revelations which he had received from God, and of those experiences which taught him to glory even in his infirmities. 2 Cor. XII. 1—10.

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 1.

2 COR. XII. 1.
IT is not expedient

I HAVE spoken with some freedom in the preceding discourse of my labours and sufferings in the Christian cause; but whatever they have been, *I well know*, that *it is not expedient*

SECT. XIX.

2 Cor. XII. 1.

for me to boast; nor would I by any means indulge myself in such a practice; *nevertheless,*[a] with the precautions I have already advanced, and with those good purposes continually in view, that have led me so far out of my common manner of speaking, *I will* now *come to* say something of those *visions and revelations of the Lord* with which his unworthy servant has, by his astonishing grace and condescension, been favoured.

2 I hardly indeed know how to mention a name so undeserving as my own, in this connection; but I will venture in the general to say, that *I* well *knew a* certain *man in Christ;*[b] one who esteems it his highest honour to belong to such a Master; who though he hath hitherto thought proper to conceal it, was remarkably indulged in this respect, *above fourteen years ago. Whether* he was then *in the body,* during that extraordinary ecstacy, *I know not; or* for a time taken *out of the body,* so that only the principle of animal life remained in it, *I know not.*[c] *God* only *knows* how that was; nor is it of any importance too curiously to search into such a circumstance. He had at least no consciousness of any thing that passed about him at that time, and all his sensations were as entirely ceased, as if his union with the body had been broken.

for me doubtless, to glory: I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knows

[a] *Nevertheless.*] The apostle's speaking of his visions and revelations, which indeed did him the highest honour, could not be a proof that he was determined not to *boast.* It is evident, therefore, that γαρ cannot have its usual signification, and be rendered *for.* Our translators take it for a mere *expletive,* and therefore omit it. I have ventured to render it *nevertheless,* as it is certain it has often various significations, and must have this signification here, if it express any thing. The force of *but* in this connection would be the same with nevertheless.

[b] *A certain man in Christ.*] He must undoubtedly mean himself, or the whole article had been quite foreign to his purpose. It appears from hence, that the Apostle had concealed this extraordinary event fourteen years; and if this epistle was written about the year 58, as we suppose it was, this vision must have fallen out in the year 44, which was so long after his conversion, as to prove it quite different from the *trance* mentioned Acts ix. 9, with which some have confounded it. Dr. Benson thinks this glorious representation was made to him while he was praying in the temple, in that journey, Acts xi. 30, chap xxii. 17, and intended to encourage him against the difficulties he was to encounter in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. Bens. Prop. Vol. I. p. 7. See Vol. III. sect. 50, note [a].

[c] *Whether in the body,* &c.] As St. Paul must know his body was not actually dead, during this *trance,* but that the animal motion of his *heart and lungs* continued, it would lead one to imagine, that he really apprehended the principle of *animal* life to be something *distinct* from the *rational* soul, which he calls *himself.* It appears at least, that he lost all consciousness of any thing about him at that time; and what the presence of an *immaterial* soul in a body can be, distinct from the capacity of perceiving by it, and acting upon it, I am yet to learn.

eth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.

3 And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth:)

4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

SECT. XIX. 2 Cor. XII. 2.

Such an one, I say, I did most intimately know, *who was snatched up even into the third heaven*, the seat of the Divine glory, and the place where Christ dwelleth at the Father's right hand, having all the celestial principalities and powers in humble subjection to him. *Yea, I* say, I 3 even *knew such a man, whether in the body, or out of the body*, I now say not, because *I know not; God knoweth;* and let him have the glory of supporting his life in so extraordinary a circumstance, which ever might be the case. And 4 I know, *that* having been thus entertained with these visions of the third heavens, on which good men are to enter after the resurrection, lest he should be impatient under the delay of his part of the glory there, *he was* also *caught up into paradise*,[d] that garden of God which is the seat of happy spirits in the intermediate state, and during their separation from the body: where he had the pleasure of an interview with many of the pious dead, *and heard* among them *unutterable words*, expressive of their sublime ideas, which he was there taught to understand. But the language was *such as it is not* lawful or *possible*[e] *for man to utter;* we have no terms of speech fit to express such conceptions, nor would it be consistent with the schemes of Providence, which require that we should be conducted by faith, rather than by sight, to suffer such circumstances as these to be revealed to the inhabitants of mortal flesh. *In such an* 5 *one*, therefore, whoever he be, *I will* venture to *boast*, so far as to say, that he received a peculiar honour from our great Lord, and for the time, was made, as it were, another man by it. *But in myself, I will not boast, unless it be in my in-*

[d] Also *caught up into paradise*.] I have followed Bishop Bull's interpretation of these words, in the distinction he makes between the *third heavens* and *paradise*. See his Works, vol. I. serm. 3, p. 89. To which Dr. Whitby agrees, who also supposes this not merely a vision (as I think it was,) but a *reality;* which if St. Paul had thought it, he must surely have concluded that he was not then *in the body*.

[e] Lawful or *possible*.] I think, with Witsius, that ἐξὸν may comprehend both.—Different divines have conjectured very differently concerning these things; of which I suppose they knew nothing. But Mr. Fleming's conjecture, that he was instructed in the doctrine of the *first resurrection*, and Mr. Whiston's, that he was instructed in the grand secrets contained in the *apostolical constitutions* revealed to the *eleven* in the chamber on Sion, and not to be publicly disclosed till many ages after; may serve as specimens of the rest.—Whist. Prim. Christianity, vol. III. p. 32.

SECT. XIX. 2 Cor. XII 6.

firmities, in those things which carry the marks of weakness, which yet in a certain connection will appear honourable too. *For if I should resolve to boast* a little on the occasion I have mentioned, *I shall not* upon the whole, *be foolish;* though it be generally so, considering the particular circumstances in which I am: *for I speak* nothing but *the* strictest *truth*, how strange soever it may seem. *But I forbear* to insist largely upon it, *lest any one should esteem me above what he sees to be in me, or*, having a fair opportunity of learning my true character, *hears of me;* for instead of arrogating to myself any undeserved regards, I would rather decline them, and should be secretly grieved and ashamed if they were paid to me.

6 For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but *now* I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me *to* be, or *that* he heareth of me.

7 I have indeed had my peculiar privileges: but alas, I have my infirmities, and my temptations too. *And lest I should be too much elevated with the abundance of* those extraordinary *revelations* of which I have been speaking, *there was given me*, that is, it pleased God to appoint to me an affliction, which was so painful, that it was like *a* pointed *thorn in the flesh*,[f] continually piercing and wounding me: and this in such circumstances, that one would think it had been intended on purpose, *that the messenger* and apostle *of Satan*, the false teachers whom I have been describing, (chap. xi. 13—15.) under that character, *might* from thence take occasion to *buffet* and upbraid *me: that* I, being subject to such disorders, though naturally resulting from the manner in which my nerves were impressed by this ecstasy, *might not be excessively exalted:*

7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure

[f] *A thorn in the flesh.*] How much this *thorn* in St. Paul's *flesh* has perplexed and disquieted commentators, they who have conversed much with them, know but too well. Many have understood it of *bodily pains;* and Mr. Baxter, being himself subject to a *nephritick* disorder, supposes it might be the *stone*, or *gravel*. The conjectures of some of the ancients are much grosser. I rather acquiesce in that interpretation by Dr. Whitby (which the author of Miscel. Sacra has adopted, and taken pains to illustrate, Essay iii. p. 22—24;) That the view he had of celestial glories, affected the system of his *nerves* in such a manner, as to occasion some *paralytic* symptoms, and particularly a *stammering* in his speech, and perhaps some ridiculous *distortion* in his countenance, referred to elsewhere in the phrase of the *infirmity in his flesh*. See Gal. iv. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ii. 5. Compare Dan. viii. 27. As this might threaten both his acceptance and usefulness, it is no wonder he was so importunate for its being removed; yet being the attendant and effect of so great a favour, he might with peculiar propriety speak of *glorying* in it.

but might bear away, like Jacob, when he had been so successfully wrestling with the angel, an infirmity in my animal frame, from which ungenerous and cruel enemies might profanely take an occasion to insult me. (Gen. xxxii. 25.)

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

8 This was indeed at first so very grievous and mortifying to me, and seemed to have so unhappy an aspect upon my acceptance and usefulness, as a preacher of the gospel, that *I* was very importunate in my petitions that it might be removed, and *besought the Lord* Jesus Christ *thrice on the occasion*, intreating him *that*, if it were his blessed will, *it might* totally *depart from me*, or at least be moderated in some considerable degree.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

9 *And* my prayer was not in vain; for, though he did not entirely and fully indulge my request, *he said to me*, in great condescension, *My grace is sufficient for thee*, to support thee under these trials, though I permit them to continue, which I now choose; *for my strength is made perfect*, and illustrated so much the more, *in* the *weakness* of the instrument by which I work; and this general maxim will take place with respect to thee. *With the greatest pleasure therefore will I boast in my weaknesses*, various as they are, *that the strength of Christ may*, as it were, *pitch its tent upon me*[g], and surround me on every side.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

10 *And therefore I feel a* secret *complacency*, rather than anxiety and terror, *in* these *infirmities*, *in* all the *injuries* I sustain, *in* all the *necessities* I endure, *in* all the *persecutions* with which I am assaulted, and *in* all the *straits* which *for Christ's sake* press me on every part; *for when I am weak, then am I strong:* never do I feel larger inward communications of strength from him, than when I am most conscious of my own weakness. Nor do I esteem any thing a greater honour to me, than that Christ should take occasion to glorify himself by those things whereby I am humbled and abased.

g *Pitch its tent*, &c.] That seems the strong emphasis of the original word ἐπισκηνώσῃ.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. XIX. Verse 10

WELL might the apostle say, that when he was weak, then was he strong; for it is difficult to tell, when he expresses a greater strength of genius or of grace, than while thus discoursing of his own infirmities. How glorious were those scars in his body which were the marks of his sufferings for Christ; and those tremblings and distortions of his nerves which were the 1 results of those bright visions of the Lord which brought down heaven to earth, and had for the time equalled a mortal man with 7 the *spirits of just men made perfect*; yea, almost with the *angels of God!*

3 Transported with the sacred impulse, he could scarcely tell whether he were in the body or out of it; but he testified, that 4 the things which he saw and heard were unutterable. Let us not repine, that he recollected and recorded nothing more particular concerning what passed before the eye of his mind, when that of the body was closed. These celestial raptures were intended to confirm his faith, and consequently likewise to confirm ours; but not to amuse our curiosity. If *the earth be full of the* 2 *goodness of the Lord*, how much more the *third heavens*, where he holds his highest court! Nor shall the *intermediate state* of souls want its proper enjoyments and blessings. Assuredly therefore believing these things, let us wait God's time for a more particular knowledge of them; and when called of him to *go forth* and receive this inheritance, like genuine children of *Abraham*, *obey*, *though we know not* particularly *whither we go.* (Heb. xi. 8.)

7 We see the danger of spiritual pride, from which even St. Paul himself was not secure. One would have imagined, that such a view of the celestial world should in itself have been sufficient to have humbled him, during all the remainder of the longest life: and yet it is evident, that God saw there was some danger, lest pride should be cherished by that which seemed so proper to destroy it: therefore was there given him a thorn in the flesh. And by how many thorns are the most distinguished Christians often pierced? Let them bless God, if thereby they are humbled too, even though the messengers and instruments of Satan should from thence take occasion to buffet them.

8 In all our exigencies, extremities, and complaints, let us apply to the *throne of grace*, and that blessed Redeemer, who intercedes before it, for proper assistance and relief. Nor let us be discouraged, though the first or second address should seem to be disregarded: the third or fourth may be successful. And what, if we do not succeed to our wish in the immediate answer? Let it content us, that we may be assured by Christ of the sufficiency of his grace. In our weakness he can illustrate his strength. And

SECT. XIX.

in that view too may we glory in our infirmities. For surely the honour of our Divine Master, in our deepest humiliation, ought to give us much more joy, than to see ourselves ever so much admired and extolled. "But, O blessed Jesus, how much of thy "strength must be manifested in us, to teach our vain and selfish "hearts a lesson, which at the very first proposal appears so reasonable, if considered in speculation alone? *Lord increase our "faith!* Increase our humility! So shalt thou have the glory in "all thou givest, and in all thou deniest us, and in all the struggles and trials to which thou mayest appoint us; and in which, "for thy sake, we will take pleasure."

Verse 10

SECT. XX.

The Apostle vindicates the frankness, sincerity, and tenderness, of his conduct, and his visible superiority to all secular considerations, in all his dealings with the church at Corinth. 2 Cor. XII. 11, *to the end.*

2 COR. XII. 11.

I AM become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 11.

SECT. XX.

2 Cor. XII. 11.

IT may be indeed, my brethren, that *I am become foolish in boasting*, as I have done above; but if it be so, you will consider where the blame lies. For you, by the manner in which some of *you*, to whom I am now speaking, have behaved yourselves, may be said to *have compelled me* to do it, even against my will. In which you are peculiarly inexcusable; *for I ought* indeed *to have been commended by you*, rather than to have found any necessity of pleading with you, in the manner I have done; *for I have in no respect* whatsoever, *failed to equal the most excellent of the apostles, though I am* myself *nothing* in the account of some; nor indeed am I any thing in reality without the aids of Divine grace and assistance, nor would I assume to myself any glory from what that hath made me.

12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.

12 Yet *truly* God has been pleased to communicate of his bounties to me in such a degree, that *the signs of an apostle were produced among you* in a variety of most convincing miracles; miracles, by which I was not puffed up, but which were wrought *in all patience, in* the midst of this unreasonable opposition I met with, notwithstanding these *signs and wonders, and powers,* which awakened the amazement of all that beheld.

SECT. XX.

2 Cor. XII. 13

Nor did I exert these miraculous powers in chastising the irregular, but chose rather, if it were possible, to conquer by love and by benefits.

And you know that I conferred many benefits: *for in what* one *respect were ye inferior to the rest of the churches* planted by the other apostles, *unless* [*it were in this*] *that I myself was not burdensome to you*, by taking any acknowledgment for my labours? No, not so much as a subsistence among you at your expence. *Forgive me*, I beseech you, *this* great *injury*; for I think, I hardly need to ask your forgiveness on any other account.

13 For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you; forgive me this wrong.

14 *Behold* now, this is *the third time I am ready to come to you*, having been disappointed twice before. (1 Cor. xvi. 5; 2 Cor. i. 15, 16.) *Nevertheless, I will not* now *be*, in the sense I have mentioned, *burdensome to you, for* God knows, *I seek not your possessions, but yourselves.* If I can but be instrumental in promoting your salvation, and at the same time secure your filial love and affection, I shall think myself happy, though I reap not the least personal advantage from your property, where it is most abundant. *For it is not fit, that the children should lay up treasure for the parents, but the parents for the children.* I therefore being your spiritual father, will communicate to you such treasures as I have,

14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you; for I seek not yours, but you. for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

15 and will not desire to share yours. *For I will with the greatest pleasure spend and be spent for your souls;* I will gladly exhaust my strength, and put myself to any expence too, in order to promote this; *though* the consequence of all should be, that *the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved* by you. How unkind soever your returns may be, if you should treat me like those perverse creatures who take a pleasure in tormenting them that love them best, yet shall you still find me a sincere friend to your best interests. (Compare 2 Tim. ii. 10; 1 Thess. ii. 8.)

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 *But* I know, some will be ready to object to all this; as what will not envy and falsehood suggest, where there is any interest in fixing an odium? *let it be so, I did not* indeed myself *burden you*, nor demand subsistence among you as my right; *but* perhaps it will be insinuated, that *being subtle I took you in by an artifice*, mak-

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty I caught you with guile.

17 Did I make gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?

18 I desired Titus, and with *him* I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? *walked we* not in the same steps?

19 Again, think you that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ. but *we do* all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would, and *that* I should be found unto you such as ye would not; lest *there be*

ing others the instruments of my mercenary principles, while I appeared myself so disinterested. I answer, by appealing to plain fact, *Did I make a prey of you, by any one whom I sent to you* with any message from me, or who came to me about any business while I was resident among you? name the man, if you can, on whom there is reason to fix any such suspicion. I defy the boldest of mine enemies to allege what must recoil on himself with so much infamy. I know, that *I intreated Titus* to make 18 you a visit, *and with* [*him*] *I sent a brother*, to keep him company on the journey. *Did Titus* then *make a gain of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit,* [*and*] *in the same steps?* Did not all his actions resemble mine, as formed upon the same principles of strict integrity, and generous friendship?

Again, do you think that we make any apology 19 *to you*, and endeavour to amuse you with mere words, mentioning Titus's coming to excuse my own absence? *In the sight of God we speak* as those who know he is witness to every action and word; yea, that he knows the secret springs of affection which actuate our hearts; and we speak as those that are *in Christ* by a solemn profession of his religion, and should abhor any thing which might bring a reflection upon it. *And all things* that we say, when we are endeavouring to reconcile your minds to us, are not for our own sake, but [*we speak*] *beloved, for your edification;* that by removing your prejudices against us, we may be capable of being more serviceable to you in your most important interests. *For I* am really distressed on this 20 account, and sadly *fear, lest* by any means *when I come* unto you with an heart full of Christian tenderness, and with all imaginable readiness to do my utmost to comfort and refresh your spirits, *I should not find you such as I could wish; and* that *I should be found by you such as ye would not wish* I should be. I fear I shall have some work before me of a very ungrateful kind, and which I would by all means desire, if possible, by this admonition to prevent. For I am very apprehensive, *lest,* [*there*

SECT. XX.

2 Cor. XII. 20.

should be] *contentions*, arising from secret and very unbecoming *emulations*,[a] and growing up to transports of *wraths*, *strifes*, where there is a clashing either of opinions or secular interests; which will tend to produce open *reproaches* or secret *whisperings*, to the manifest prejudice of each others character; the inward *swellings* of pride and ambition, or perhaps the open confusion of riots and *tumults*, by which your cause in general will be exposed to public contempt:

21 [*And*] indeed on the whole, I am very apprehensive, *lest my God should humble* and mortify *me when I come among you again*; so that my spirit should be even dejected and broken, on account of the sad change which hath passed since I left Corinth; *and lest I should* find cause to *mourn over many who have sinned already*, *and* who, though several others have been wrought upon by my admonitions, *have not repented of the uncleanness and fornications, and lasciviousness, which they have committed*; against whom therefore, I fear I shall find myself obliged, in virtue of my office, to pass such censures, as it pains and pierces my heart so much as to think of

debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings tumults.

21 *And* lest when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness, which they have committed

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 12 HOW amiable was the goodness of the apostle, in adding all patience to those signs of his Divine mission, which were with so much splendour given among the Corinthians, when there were so many things to have excused, or rather to have vindicated his severity. Such meekness had he learned of Christ, such does he teach to succeeding ministers and private Christians. How disinterested was his behaviour in every part of it;

14 *not seeking their substance, but their souls!* And indeed what is the greatest gain, which avarice, in its most artful and successful forms, can make of the ministry, when compared with *winning souls to Christ*, and bringing them into the *way of salvation*? Who, that deserves the name of a Minister, would not

15 gladly sacrifice the views of worldly interest to this, and rejoice in an opportunity of *spending and of being spent for this*? Yet we see, that even this cannot always command the returns of love; but the love, as well as the praise, of men, is, in com-

[a] *Contentions, emulations*, &c.] All these were the natural consequences of those debates which had arisen among them; and therefore he, in a very artful manner, gives this solemn warning with relation to them.

parison, a matter of small importance. It will surely engage the approbation of God: and all the slights and injuries over which this benevolent disposition triumphs, will be remembered by him, with proportionable tokens of his gracious acceptance.

SECT. XX.

Happy was that prudence which made the proof of integrity so clear, and the appeal to the whole world so confident, as it here appears. So may we avoid every appearance of any thing which might beget a suspicion of sinister designs, that we may vindicate ourselves from every such insinuation, with the noble freedom of those who are *approved to God, and the consciences of men.* To preserve this, may we always speak and act *as before God, in Christ,* and do all things, not for the gratification of our own humour, or advancement of our secular interest, but for the *edification of others.*

Verse 16, 18

19

The ministers of the gospel cannot but be humbled, when any thing contrary to the rules and genius of it is to be found among the people of their care and charge; whether they be pollutions of the flesh, or of the spirit: and they may be in some instances as effectually mortified and distressed, by debates, envyings, strifes, backbitings, and whisperings, as by uncleanness, fornication, and lasciviousness. But when any of these things occur, as it is to be feared that in most Christian societies, or at least in such as are considerable for their numbers, they sometimes will; let it be remembered that they happen by the permission of Providence. God hath his wise ends in suffering what is indeed so lamentable: thus humbling the shepherd, that the flock may be farther edified; that he may approve his fidelity in more vigorous efforts for reformation; and may not be excessively exalted by that better success, wherewith, in other instances, God may crown his endeavours.

20

21

SECT. XXI.

The Apostle concludes his epistle with assuring the Corinthians very tenderly, how much it would grieve him to be obliged to shew his apostolic power, by inflicting any miraculous punishment on those who continued to oppose him; subjoining, at the end of all, proper salutations, and his solemn benediction. 2 Cor. XIII. 1, *throughout.*

2 COR. XIII. 1.

THIS is the third

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 1.

BUT I will return now from that digression which hath carried me away from what I was entering upon before. [*It is*] *now,* as I said (chap. xii. 14.) *the third time, that* I tell you,

SECT. XXI.

2 Cor. XIII. 1.

I am coming to you;[a] and as several cases will come before me on which it will be necessary to give my judgment, I assure you, I shall think myself obliged to proceed on that reasonable maxim in the Jewish constitution, (Numb. xxxv. 30; Deut. xvii. 6; chap. xix. 15.) that *every word*, or thing, admitted for evidence in the decision, *shall be established by* the concurrence of what cometh from *the mouth of two or three* credible *witnesses*. 2 And you will remember, that *I have* formerly *foretold* you, *and do foretel it* now again, *as if I were present the second time* in person; *and being absent* in body, but not in spirit, *I now write to those that have sinned already* in any scandalous and aggravated manner, *and to all the rest*, that they may take notice of it, and be filled with a sacred awe, *that if I come again, I will not spare* [*you*,[b]] as I have hitherto done; but am determined, by the divine permission, to animadvert upon notorious offenders, by the exertion of that miraculous power with which God hath endowed me. 3 *Since*, after all the evidence you have already had, some of *you* are so strangely unreasonable, as to *seek a* further *proof of Christ speaking* by his spirit *in me*, even of the authority of that glorious and almighty Saviour, *who is not weak towards you, but powerful among you* by what he has already wrought,[c] you may at length have such demonstrations of it, as may perhaps cost some of you 4 dear. *For though he was* once *crucified* as *through* a state of *weakness*, submitting to those

time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

2 I told you before, and foretel you as if I were present the second time, and being absent now, I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that if I come again, I will not spare:

3 Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.

4 For though he was crucified through

[a] *The third time* I tell you *I am coming*: τριτον τουτο ερχομαι.] So the words may be taken, though I own them ambiguous. Perhaps this may intimate, that this was the *third epistle* he had wrote to them, in which he had mentioned his purpose of coming, but we cannot certainly infer it. He seems here to resume the sentence he had begun, chap. xii. 14. Such interruptions are frequent in St. Paul, and in many other writers who have not a regard to an artificial dress, and do not stand to correct every little inaccuracy, but abound in quickness and variety of thought, as Mr. Locke justly observes.

[b] *I will not spare* you.] It is (as Bishop Burnet very justly observes,) a great confirmation of the veracity of the apostles, that when factions were raised against them, they use none of the arts of flattery, however necessary they might seem; but depended on the force of a miraculous power to reduce offenders; which it would have been a most absurd thing to have pretended to, if they had not really been conscious to themselves that it was engaged in their favour. Burnet on the Art. p. 62. See 1 Cor. iv. 21, note [f].

[c] Already wrought.] This may, as Mr. Cradock and others observe, very probably refer to some miraculous punishment inflicted lately on the incestuous Corinthian.

SECT. XXI.

2 Cor. XIII. 4.

weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God: for we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

infirmities of mortal flesh, which put him into the hands of his enemies, and waving the exertion of that miraculous energy, by which he could so soon have rescued himself, and destroyed them; *nevertheless, he* now *liveth by the power of God* the Father, whereby he obtained a glorious resurrection, and is now ascended to a seat of uncontrouled and universal authority. *And* thus *we* his apostles, though we *are also weak in him*, and to them who regard only external appearances, may seem contemptible, *nevertheless, shall live with him by the power of God*, manifested *to you* in our favour to give a kind of resurrection to that apostolical authority which may have seemed for a while dormant and dead.

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, *how* that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

5 You examine and try me; but let me admonish you to turn the search inward, and to *examine* and try *yourselves*, that ye may certainly know, *whether ye are in the faith*, whether ye be true Christians or not. For if you on a strict inquiry find that you are, you will therein find a proof of my being a true apostle; as it is by means of my extraordinary gift that you are become so. *Prove yourselves*,[d] my brethren, whether you can, or cannot stand the test. *Do you not know yourselves*, when the subject of knowledge lies so near you, and is always before your eye? Are you not sensible *that Jesus Christ is* dwelling *in you* by the sanctifying and transforming influences of his Spirit; *unless ye are* mere nominal Christians, and such as, whatever your gifts be, will finally be *disapproved*[e] and rejected, as reprobate silver, that will not stand the touchstone?

6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

6 *But* whatever be the case of any of you, *I hope ye shall* soon *know that we are not disapproved*, and have not lost[f] our evidence of the Divine presence and

[d] *Examine yourselves—prove yourselves.*] Whether you be δοκιμοι, *such as can stand the test;* or αδοκιμοι, *such as cannot*, for that is the proper import of the word which we render *reprobates*. The difference between πειραζειν, and δοκιμαζειν, seems to be gradual: examine and *thoroughly* prove.

[e] *Unless ye are disapproved.*] Dr. Guyse paraphrases the words ει μη τι αδοκιμοι εστε, "unless there be something very "disapprovable in you;" and it certainly expresses the sense with great propriety; but as the apostle supposes this to be something which would prove that Christ was not dwelling with and among them, it seems that it must be extended to the sense given in the paraphrase.

[f] Have not lost, &c.]. It seems that the *possibility* of losing extraordinary gifts by the *abuse* of them, is finely insinuated in this *oblique* manner; and it might, if rightly understood, have its weight with many of them.

SECT. XXI.

2 Cor. XIII. 7.

approbation. *But* I am far from desiring to produce such evidences of it as would be grievous to you; and can truly say, that *I wish to God ye may do no evil* in any respect, *and not that we may be manifested* [*as*] *approved*, by such awful methods as those to which I refer: *but* on the contrary, *that ye may do what is* good, *beautiful*, and amiable, that which will adorn your profession in the most effectual manner; *though we should be as* if we were *disapproved*, and upon a level with those who have no testimonials of an extraordinary mission to produce. 8 *For we are not able to do any thing against the* interest of that important system of *truth*, which God hath intrusted us with; *but* must strenuously act *for the* service of the *truth*, and support of the gospel, and not act by personal inclinations and affections, of resentment on the one hand, or tenderness on the other.

9 I wish the regularity of your behaviour at all events, as I declared above; *for we rejoice when we are weak*, or seem so by not exerting any miraculous powers to the purposes we have hinted; *and* when *ye*, our dear converts and brethren, *are strong* in gifts and graces, in faith and good works: *and this also we wish* [*even*] *your being set in perfect* good *order*.[g] Your entire reformation would give us the greatest pleasure imaginable, a pleasure far beyond what we could derive from the most astonishing interpositions of God, to chastise those that rebel against us. 10 *Therefore* upon the whole *I write these things* thus largely *being absent, that when I am present I may not* be obliged to *act severely according to the* Divine and extraordinary *power which the Lord* Jesus Christ *hath given me, for the edification* of the several members of his church, *and not for* the *destruction* of men's lives and comforts. And therefore it is that I give you this warning; in order to prevent what would otherwise be grievous to myself, as well as to you.

11 *As for what remains*, my dear *brethren, farewel*; and may all joy and happiness ever attend you. [illegible] that this may be the case, let it *be*

7 Now I pray to God that ye do no evil: not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

9 For we are glad when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, *even* your perfection.

10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

11 Finally, brethren, farewel. Be

[g] [illegible] *in perfect good order*.] This [illegible] import of *καταρτισιν*, that per[illegible] which was not yet wrought, though something considerable had been done towards it.

SECT. XXI.

2 Cor. XIII. 11.

perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

your great care, that ye may be *perfect*, that ye may arrive at the highest degrees of goodness. May you all *be comforted* with those strong consolations which true Christianity suggests, and exhorted and animated by the instructions it inculcates. *Attend to the same thing*,[h] pursue with the greatest unanimity of heart, and intenseness of affection, that which ought to be the great end of all our schemes and designs, the care of glorifying God, and adorning the gospel. And as you have, in some instances, seemed to have forgotten how essential it is to true Christianity, that its professors should abstain from mutual injuries, and cultivate unfeigned friendship, let me urge it upon you that ye *be peaceful*, candid, and affectionate in your sentiments; *and the God of love and peace will* graciously own you as his children, and *be* favourably *with you*, and fix his residence among you.

12 Greet one another with an holy kiss.

12 And in token of this entire harmony, and endeared affection, *salute each other* according to the custom of your assemblies, *with an holy kiss* as a proper expression of the purest and most ardent love.

13 All the saints salute you.

13 *All the saints*, that is, the Christians here, in the place from whence I now write, *salute you* with the sincerest affection, and will always rejoice to hear of your peace, prosperity, and edification.

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

14 I conclude all with my most affectionate good wishes for you; even that *the* perpetual *favour of the Lord Jesus Christ*,[i] the great Head of the church, in whom all the fulness of grace dwells; *and the* constant and peculiar *love of God* the Father, *and the* most abundant *communion* and fellowship *of the Holy Ghost*, in the richest anointings of his gifts and graces, may [*be*] *with you*, and rest upon you *all* continually, henceforth and for ever. *Amen*: may God ratify the

[h] *Attend to the same thing.*] So το αυτο φρονειτε should undoubtedly be rendered rather than *be of one mind*, which in some respects might have been impossible. See my Sermon on Candour and Unanimity, p 8 and Phil. ii. 2, and note there.

[i] *Favour of the Lord Jesus Christ.*] I express χαρις by *favour* here, for if *grace* be taken for sanctifying influences communicated from Christ, (which to be sure makes a great part of the idea,) it may be less easy to distinguish it from the *communion of the Spirit.*—It is with great reason, that this comprehensive and instructive benediction is pronounced just before our assemblies for public worship are dismissed; and it is a very indecent thing to see so many quitting them, or getting into postures of remove, before this short sentence can be ended. Compare Numb. vi. 26, 27.

SECT. XXI. important wish, so as to answer and exceed your most exalted hopes.

IMPROVEMENT.

ADORED be the name of that compassionate Redeemer, who was once *crucified* as *through weakness*; and when he could have commanded more than *twelve legions of angels* to his rescue, voluntarily submitted to be seized and bound, like an helpless mortal, subject to superior force, and thus led away to torture and death! He lives for ever by the power of God, by a life derived from him: may we, weak as we are in ourselves, live through him to all the purposes of the Christian life.

Verse 4

And that this life may flourish abundantly, let us be often engaged to examine ourselves; since it will be so great a scandal and so great a snare, to be strangers at home. *Do we not* indeed after all *know ourselves?* Let us search, whether *Jesus Christ be in us?* Whether he be formed in our hearts, whether he live and act in us by his Holy Spirit? Else shall we be treated as reprobate silver, shall be justly rejected of God, and no gifts or privileges will avail us. Having gained the sure evidences of sincere goodness in ourselves, we may, with the greater cheerfulness and confidence, *pray for our brethren;* and let us offer the Apostle's petition for them, that they may do no evil, but every thing that is just and honourable, beautiful and lovely. never desiring to exalt ourselves on the mistakes and follies of others; but on the contrary, wishing their perfection, and labouring to the utmost to promote it.

5 6 9

How charming a spirit breathes in those sentences in which the Apostle takes his leave of the Corinthians! So much wisdom and goodness, that one is almost grieved, that he who bids farewel in such an engaging manner, does it so soon. Let us however bear his parting words in mind. When ministers are leaving those among whom they have laboured, when Christian friends are separated from each other, let this be their common petition and care, that they may be improved and comforted; that unanimity and peace may prevail and increase; and that the God of peace may be with them all: that he may be with them in those happy effects, and blessed operations, which will be the result of the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost.*

12

13 How often hath this comprehensive benediction been pronounced! Let us study it more and more; that we may value it proportionably, that we set ourselves to deliver, or to receive it, with a becoming solemnity; with eyes and hearts lifted up to God, who, *when out of Zion he commandeth the blessing*, bestows in it *life for evermore. Amen!*

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.